

The Oklahoma Department of Civil Emergency  
Management

After Action Report

Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building Bombing  
19 April 1995 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

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# Photographs

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# The Oklahoma Department of Civil Emergency Management

## After Action Report

### Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building Bombing

19 April 1995 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

## Executive Summary

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At 9:02 a.m., Wednesday, April 19, 1995, terrorism struck Oklahoma City, when a bomb exploded in front of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building. The bomb was located within the confines of a 24-foot Ryder rental truck. The explosive mixture had been prepared for charge with a detonation cord and pre-positioned, parked parallel, in a loading lane on the north side of the Murrah Building, near the intersection of N.W. 5th Street and Robinson Avenue. The force of the explosion was of such magnitude that it destroyed approximately one-third of the Murrah Building. The entire north face of the structure was reduced to rubble and each of the nine floors, plus the roof, received extensive damage. Contents of the first and second floors were blown against the southern portion of the building, while the third through ninth floors were initially raised by the blast and proceeded to pancake one atop the other at street level. When the dust cleared, approximately one-third of the structure was located in a pile of debris, measuring in some places 35-feet in height and running the length of the building. At the time of the blast, the Murrah Building housed some 600 federal and contract workers, as well as an estimated 250 visitors.

Federal agencies housed in the Murrah Building included the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms; the Drug Enforcement Administration; the Secret Service; the Department of Housing and Urban Development; the Social Security Administration; the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps recruitment offices; the Veterans Administration; the General Accounting Office; the Department of Health and Human Services; the Department of Defense; the U.S. Customs Service; the Department of Agriculture; the Department of Transportation; and, the General Services Administration. An office of the Federal Employees Credit Union and the "America's Kids" Child Care Development Center were also housed in the building. (A floor plan

of the Murrah Building is detailed in Exhibit A) Damage extended throughout Oklahoma City's downtown, covering an estimated 48-square-block area. The explosion overturned automobiles and numerous vehicles erupted into flames after the blast. Extensive structural damage was not limited to the Murrah Building, but also extended to the Regency Tower, a twenty-four story, 273-unit apartment complex, located one block to the west. Additionally, directly north of the Murrah Building, the two-story Oklahoma Water Resources Board office building, the six-story, historic, Journal Record Building, and the three-story Athenian Building received heavy damage. Surrounding structures which received the brunt of the explosion included the First Methodist Church and YMCA, to the east; the federal courthouse, to the south; and, the St. Joseph's Old Cathedral and Rectory, and U.S. Post Office, to the west. (see Exhibit B)

The explosion knocked-out primary and back-up phone lines for the Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA), the local ambulance service. Subsequently, 9-1-1 was the only communication remaining. The first call for medical assistance was received by EMSA at 9:03:25 a.m. However, upon hearing the blast, seven emergency medical service (EMS) units responded from EMSA's headquarters (N.W. 10th St. & Walker Ave.).

First-in fire companies were faced with an overwhelming rescue operation. The closest fire/emergency response units to the scene were at the Oklahoma City Fire Department's Station One, five blocks away. Emergency personnel and equipment from this station responded immediately to the bombing site. A meeting of the department's chiefs was in progress at Station One at the time of the explosion. They too reacted immediately to the sound of the blast and relocated to each one's appropriate point of command. As personnel and apparatus approached the scene, firefighters encountered debris scattered throughout the streets, covering several blocks surrounding the Murrah Building. Passages had to be cleared to allow entry of responding equipment. Additionally, firefighters encountered injured victims fleeing the blast site. Realizing that injuries would be numerous, two medical triage areas were quickly established. Primary triage and treatment was initially positioned at N.W. 6th St. and Robinson Ave. (with medical command), but was later moved to N.W. 5th St. and Robinson Avenue. Secondary triage and treatment was established at the federal building. The injured were staged in these areas awaiting assessment, immediate treatment, and prioritized transportation.

Without delay, fire, emergency medical, law enforcement personnel, voluntary organization workers and many civilians, entered the bombed structure in a massive search and rescue effort. In some instances, human chains were formed to accommodate the safe and rapid removal of victims as they were located. A minimum of two subsequent "bomb scares" forced the evacuation of these personnel. The evacuation of the structure allowed officials to create a controlled perimeter around

the dangerous site. Rescue workers were not allowed to re-enter the site until confirmation was given that no additional explosive devices were located.

Immediately following the blast, an Incident Command System (ICS) was quickly established by the Oklahoma City Fire Department, to manage the intensive search and rescue mission. The "system" effectively handled the massive influx of resources which included federal, state, local and voluntary agency response personnel and equipment, under the sole command of the Oklahoma City Fire Department. The Oklahoma City Police Department handled the traffic and security aspects of the event in coordination with the Oklahoma County Sheriff, state and federal agencies.

At 9:00 a.m. on April 19th, Oklahoma Department of Civil Emergency Management (ODCEM) personnel were conducting a planning meeting with state agency liaison officers at the Oklahoma National Guard Military Academy, located at N.E. 63rd St. and Kelley Avenue. The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) is located in the tunnel between the Sequoyah and Will Rogers Buildings on the State Capitol Complex. The SEOC was constructed in 1963, during the height of the cold war, and designed to withstand the shock of a 20-megaton blast as close as three miles away, coincidentally, the approximate distance to the Murrah Building. Even though the explosion was reported to have been felt as far as 30 miles from the site, the first notification to the SEOC came at 9:04 a.m., when personnel at the military academy made contact. All SEOC personnel, as well as the state agency liaison officers, were advised to report to the operational area of the center immediately. The Disaster Recovery Manager was issued two hand-held radios and ordered to deploy to the site by State Director Tom Feuerborn. By 9:25 a.m. the center was fully operational and Director Feuerborn made the decision to maintain 24-hour operations until further notice. State agencies initially represented in the SEOC included the Oklahoma Department of Public Safety, the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, the Oklahoma Military Department, the Oklahoma Department of Health and the Oklahoma Department of Education. These agencies were shortly supplemented by the National Weather Service, the Civil Air Patrol and the American Red Cross.

The incident was reported to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Region VI headquarters, in Denton, Texas, at 9:30 a.m. Regional Director R.L. "Buddy" Young ordered the immediate activation of the Regional Operations Center (ROC), the regional, federal counterpart to the SEOC.

At 9:45 a.m. Governor Frank Keating ordered a "State of Emergency" (see Exhibit C) and released from duty all Oklahoma City area, non-essential state personnel as a safety measure. Accompanied by their staffs, the Governor and Lieutenant Governor Mary Fallin arrived at the SEOC at 10:05 a.m. and received an immediate situation briefing from ODCEM Director Feuerborn. For the remainder of the day the Governor alternated his command between the SEOC and the disaster site.

By 10:35 a.m. Regional Director Young had briefed FEMA headquarters, in Washington D.C., and organized a group of key staff to accompany him to Oklahoma City. FEMA immediately put Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Task Forces from Phoenix, Arizona and Sacramento, California on alert and at 10:55 activated each team for deployment to Oklahoma City.

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#### April 19th at the Site

After arriving at the Murrah Building, the Disaster Recovery Manager located the Incident Command Post (ICP) at the intersection of N.W. 6th St. and Harvey Avenue. He made initial contact with the Incident Commander (IC) and offered all state assets necessary to supplement the response efforts. At the time, the most pressing need was to cordon-off and maintain a secure perimeter around the structure. The option of National Guard troops and additional Public Safety Officers was discussed and agreed upon. The Recovery Manager attempted to make this request to the SEOC via cellular telephone, but found the effort to be impossible due to an obvious system overload. The transmission was completed by means of a hand-held radio.

Following this initial communication between the site and the SEOC, the first of at least two bomb scares occurred. People began running north from the Murrah Building, relaying that another bomb had been located. Without the ability to either confirm or deny the threat, the IC made the decision to relocate the command post two blocks north to a vacant parking lot on the southwest corner of N.W. 8th St. and Harvey Avenue. After the relocation of both the Oklahoma City Fire Department Mobile Command Vehicle and the Oklahoma City Police Department Mobile Command Vehicle, other similar units began arriving in the same parking lot. Such units included vehicles representing the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). Southwestern Bell Telephone Company also parked a truck at this location for the purpose of issuing free-use cellular phones to any and all response personnel. They also reported that a temporary "cellular-on-wheels" site was currently being erected to accommodate the high-traffic cellular use in the downtown area.

By 10:30 a.m., the State Exercise Training Officer arrived at the ICP to supplement the forward State Emergency Management element. Reports from the National Weather Service predicted a threat of rain by the afternoon and the request was made through the SEOC to have the National Guard erect a tent near the ICP. Due to the lack of shelter and the increasing number of emergency personnel and equipment arriving at the confined parking lot, the IC made the decision to once again relocate the ICP. The new location selected was directly across the street in the Southwestern Bell Telephone Company's Corporate Headquarters parking lot (S.E. corner of N.W. 8th St. and Harvey Ave.), an option which was given to the IC by company officials.

The new location was far more accommodating to emergency personnel as it provided a larger parking area, a sheltered garage where voluntary agencies and private organizations could distribute food and store immediate donations, and the office building, itself, which met the sanitary needs of the emergency/relief personnel and later housed the first two US&R Task Forces.

Additional mobile command units arriving at the ICP represented the U.S. Marshals Service and two vehicles from the Oklahoma Department of Public Safety. The Oklahoma National Guard erected their tent in the parking lot, with assistance from Oklahoma City Public Works, and maintained forward operations from this site throughout the event. Chained-link fencing was placed around the parking lot and access was restricted on Harvey Ave. from 8th St. south.

Through the aid of Oklahoma City officials, the FBI secured a vacant building located at 11 N.E. 6th St. to utilize as a command post for the investigative element of the crime. The BATF and the DEA joined forces with the FBI in this effort and their respective staff spent the afternoon establishing the operations center, while field operations continued. Weldon Kennedy, of the Phoenix, Arizona office of the FBI, was assigned Special Agent-In-Charge of the incident and arrived at the FBI command post later that evening.

The two-man State Emergency Management forward element maintained a walking post which consisted of periodic discussions with Oklahoma City Fire Department, Oklahoma City Police Department and Oklahoma County Emergency Management concerning potential needs in which state resources could be utilized. Additionally, constant liaison relationships were maintained with the Oklahoma Department of Public Safety, the National Guard and the American Red Cross, to attempt to better coordinate a unified effort. Requests from the Oklahoma Medical Examiner's Office were channeled directly through the SEOC, though periodic visits, by the forward element, were made to the temporary morgue, established at the First Methodist Church Building at the N.E. corner of 4th St. and Robinson Avenue.

By mid-afternoon, the promised precipitation arrived and donated rain gear was issued by volunteers. In fact, by early afternoon, it became increasingly apparent that donated goods would be a problem for the duration of the event. Commercial tractor-trailers, pick-ups and other private vehicles began lining-up at the corner of N.W. 8th St. and Harvey Ave., loaded with everything from wheel barrows to football helmets. Voluntary organizations began storing items as best they could, but new drop-off locations had to be established rapidly and inventory control became an overwhelming task. It should also be noted that the ICP was not the only location where donated goods were being delivered. This added to the overall lack of donations coordination and represents one of the major deficiencies in the state and local planning effort.



Another escalating problem facing the IC was the increasing influx of media representatives arriving at the scene. The decision was made to locate all media personnel within a vacant parking area, covering approximately one-half a square block, on Harvey Ave. between N.W. 6th and 7th streets. This area was roped-off, with access allowed to credentialed personnel. While it was not as close to the Murrah Building as the media would have liked, it did offer an unobstructed view of the structure. Oklahoma City Police and Fire public information specialists provided initial periodic updates to the media and a joint federal, state and local press conference was scheduled for the following morning at the Civic Center Music Hall's "Hall of Mirrors", located at 201 Channing Square.

Due to the nature of the incident, crime scene standard operating procedures had to be followed and the FBI cordoned-off an inner perimeter around the Murrah Building, allowing access on N.W. 5th St. at either the Robinson Ave. or Harvey Ave. intersection. The FBI also began a procedure to create and issue numerical, photo-identification badges to necessary personnel. Additionally, Oklahoma City established a day-pass procedure which restricted unauthorized personnel entry to the site.

The Oklahoma City Fire Department established a Forward Command Post inside the interior loading dock of the Murrah Building. This site was located at the northwest corner of the building, inside the single-story concrete structure which stood alone, yet was in contact with the Murrah Building. The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) Incident Support Team (IST) was activated and co-located in the Forward Command Post. The IST is a trained and equipped unit of operational personnel from around the nation, designed to manage and coordinate the site-specific FEMA response mission during catastrophic disasters. Equipment, including electrical power, telephones, copiers, tables, chairs, and other necessary items, was immediately brought in to support their efforts.

At 3:30 p.m. the First Christian Church, N.W. 36th St. and N. Walker Ave., was established by the State Medical Examiner's Office as the site of the "Family Assistance Center" (a.k.a. "The Compassion Center"). Immediate family members received accurate briefings directly from the State Medical Examiner's Office at this location twice daily. The Assistance Center provided information, mental health counseling, and comfort to those who had fallen victim to this event or who either lost or had missing family members in the building. Center support was provided by many organizations, including the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, the Oklahoma Funeral Directors Association, and many pastors, chaplains, and mental health professionals throughout the area, state and nation. The Oklahoma County Sheriff's Office and the Oklahoma National Guard provided security for the center.

The American Red Cross opened a shelter for those displaced by the explosion. They also activated the National Disaster Services Human Resources Team to administer large scale disaster assistance to the victims of this incident.

With donated goods and appropriate distribution becoming an increasing concern, Red Cross logistics support was provided from warehouses at the ICP and at N.W. 5th St. and Harvey Ave., inside the damaged U.S. Post Office. Other logistics sites were provided by "Feed the Children", an Oklahoma City headquartered relief organization, and the Salvation Army.

Feed The Children responded by shipping requested food and disaster supplies out of their local warehouse at 32 N. McCormick, in Oklahoma City, by processing newly donated items supplied by the public, by calling corporate contacts with requests for specifically needed items, and by supervising volunteers. They also set-up and staffed an on-site supply center near N.W. 5th St. and Robinson Ave., where a coordinated effort was established to provide needed items to rescue workers from their international headquarters at 333 N. Meridian and their warehouse.

The Oklahoma City Fire Department established their Technical Logistics Center at 225 N.W. 6th St., in a covered parking garage.

The Oklahoma Restaurant Association had just finished their annual conference when the explosion occurred. Subsequently, they quickly established a 24-hour food service operation, at the Myriad Convention Center, to feed all emergency response workers. Eventually, the Myriad was established as a center which met the needs of all personnel responding to the incident. Donated clothing, food, equipment and supplies were available on a 24-hour basis. Other volunteer and donated services included over-the-counter pharmaceutical and personal hygiene items, hair care, optometric, chiropractic, and podiatric care, and massage therapy. AT&T provided free telephone calls home for the US&R Task Forces, complimented by a free mail and parcel delivery service provided by United Parcel Service. The Myriad also housed nine of the 11 US&R Task Forces.

Critical Incident Stress Debriefings and mental health services were offered by, but not limited to, professionals from the Oklahoma City Fire and Police Departments, the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, the FBI, the American Red Cross and volunteer private specialists. Additionally, crisis hotlines were established throughout the city to meet the needs of the general public.

At 4:00 p.m., CST, President Clinton announced that he had signed Emergency Declaration FEMA-3115-EM-OK. (see Exhibit D) This declaration, under provisions contained in Title V of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (P.L. 93-288, as amended), permits the federal government to provide emergency assistance to save lives, protect property, public health & safety, and to

lessen or avert the threat of further damage. The declaration was specifically made under the authority of Section 501 (b), which Congress created to allow the President to provide immediate assistance for an "emergency involving primary federal responsibilities."

The signing of this declaration not only gave the federal government primary responsibility to respond to the disaster, but also authorized 100% federal financial reimbursement for all eligible response missions performed by local and state government. It should be noted that even though this declaration provided authority and responsibility to the federal government, the chain of command did not change. Oklahoma City Fire Department still controlled the search and rescue mission and the FBI was still in charge of the investigative mission of the federal crime which had been committed.

By late afternoon a meeting was held at the ICP between Oklahoma City Police, Oklahoma County Sheriff's Office, Oklahoma Department of Public Safety, Oklahoma Military Department and ODCEM to permanently establish an outer perimeter to the scene. Oklahoma City Police requested state support to maintain a 24-hour perimeter encompassing 18 square blocks. It was decided the north-south limits would be N.W. 8th St. and Robert S. Kerr Ave., respectively. The perimeter was maintained on N. Hudson Ave. on the west and N. Broadway on the east. (see Exhibit E) Numbers of personnel from each entity were decided upon and the outer perimeter was immediately established around-the-clock, until further notice. Prior to this meeting, outer perimeter control had been maintained by Oklahoma City Police and the Oklahoma County Sheriff's Office.

The inner perimeter, initially encompassing the Murrah Building and adjacent damaged structures, which could potentially contain evidence, was secured by the FBI and subsequently reduced as areas were combed and determined free of additional evidence. This was accomplished through federal law enforcement manpower and temporary chained-link fencing. The square block on which the Murrah Building sat remains secured, by the General Services Administration (GSA), at the date of this report.

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## At the SEOC

When the decision was made at 9:25 a.m. to establish 24-hour operations, selected ODCEM staff were sent home, and were required to report to the SEOC for a midnight to noon shift. The ODCEM Chief of Operations also required staff to report 15 minutes prior to each shift for briefing purposes. A similar 12-hour-on, 12-hour-off format was established for forward operations, with additional time inserted for

briefing/de-briefing responsibilities. State agency liaisons were requested to establish staffing patterns consistent with ODCEM's, to ensure operational continuity.

FEMA Regional Director Young and his staff arrived at the SEOC at 2:05 p.m. and immediately began coordinating federal operations. ODCEM Director Feuerborn received notification from Washington, D.C. that FEMA's National Director, James Lee Witt, would arrive in Oklahoma City at approximately 7:30 p.m. After a conference call with Washington and the FBI, FEMA's Mobile Emergency Response Support (MERS) was alerted to establish secure satellite communications at the FBI's investigative center. Discussion ensued among executives to establish a FEMA Disaster Field Office (DFO) and to appoint both a Federal and a Defense Coordinating Officer.

At 5:00 p.m. Director Feuerborn and Lt. Governor Fallin briefed Oklahoma's Congressional Delegation.

FEMA Director Witt and selected staff arrived at the SEOC at 8:10 p.m. By this time FEMA had response specialists in the field and task-specific personnel, i.e., public affairs, public health, resource management and GSA, in Oklahoma City designing appropriate response strategies.

The US&R Task Force from Phoenix arrived at approximately 10:45 p.m. to meet with command personnel, survey the incident structure, and to conduct a pre-work assessment of the overall situation. The Sacramento US&R Task Force arrived at 11:00 p.m. These two initial teams were housed at the Southwestern Bell Headquarters Building. An additional nine US&R teams were activated and housed at the Myriad Convention Center.

The two ODCEM forward operations personnel were relieved by the Senior Operations Officer at approximately 11:35 p.m. They returned to the SEOC and briefed the Director, Governor and his staff on continuing operational developments and issues at the site.

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## April 20th and beyond

Following the chaotic series of activities on April 19th, structure and responsibility gradually emerged throughout the response and recovery efforts. Strategy meetings at the SEOC were held early every morning between Witt, Feuerborn and their accompanying personnel. Situation reports were developed and distributed daily to both the Governor and the President. The FBI held investigative meetings twice daily and all key players briefed the public at press conferences, on a minimum schedule of once per day.

Special Agent Kennedy made it clear in his initial April 20th meeting that priorities were as follows: 1. locate any survivors; 2. remove any victims; and, 3. process the crime scene. This basic directive helped to avert many potential problems which could have arisen in this unique situation.

A Disaster Field Office (DFO) was established at 420 W. Main St. where state and federal efforts could be unified. A request from the IC to establish a Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC), where federal and state personnel could support local coordination efforts, was accomplished and created within the confines of the Myriad Convention Center on April 23rd. This facility also housed the Joint Information Center, which facilitated the release of all public information.

The MACC was reduced in size and transferred to the Oklahoma City 9-1-1 Center, formerly the Oklahoma City Emergency Operations Center (4600 N. Martin Luther King Blvd.), on April 27th. All coordination of requests for assistance were reverted back to the IC, SEOC and DFO on May 2nd.

At the site, the search and rescue mission continued for 17 days. A total of 11 US&R Task Forces were activated to support the Oklahoma City Fire Department. (see Exhibit F) The mountain of debris which was deposited on the north face of the Murrah Building was removed almost entirely by hand, in five-gallon buckets. This was done for three reasons: 1. The possibility that a survivor could be located and out of respect to each fatality and their families; 2. The continuing concern over the structural integrity of the building, which prevented the use of heavy equipment; and, 3. The control and analysis of each piece of debris removed for evidentiary purposes. The operation was also delayed by mother nature. During the 17-day mission, rescue workers were subjected to high winds, rain, sleet, lightening and hail on numerous occasions.

Shortly after midnight on May 5th, search and rescue operations were determined to be officially complete. It was anticipated at that time that three bodies remained in the rubble. Due to the believed location and potential safety hazards, the decision was made to leave the remaining bodies in the rubble until after the implosion of the structure.

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## Long-term Recovery

On April 26th, the State of Oklahoma requested and received Presidential Major Disaster Declaration FEMA-1048-DR-OK. (see Exhibit G) This declaration activated a multitude of recovery and relief programs for victims' families, injured, small business owners and public entities. Consistent with this long-term relief effort, the "Oklahoma City Bombing Disaster Resource Coordination Committee" (RCC), made-

up of government and voluntary agencies and donated funds administrators, was formed to service the unmet needs of victims which were not covered under the declaration. The RCC continues to meet on a weekly basis and to date has distributed over \$2 million of donated funds.

Pursuant to Presidential Declaration FEMA-1048-DR-OK, a "Recovery Service Center" (RSC) was officially opened at Shepherd Mall, N.W. 23rd St. and Villa, on Saturday, April 29th. The RSC allowed victims of the disaster an opportunity to visit face-to-face with local, state, federal and voluntary agency representatives who administered relief programs provided under the declaration. As soon as the President signed the declaration on the 26th, the national toll-free teleregistration system was activated for victim registration.

The Family Assistance Center (a.k.a. The Compassion Center) was officially transferred to the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services on May 5th and became known as "Project Heartland". A facility for long term mental health services was established in Oklahoma City and designated as the Project Heartland Center, located at 5500 N. Western. It continues to provide support for survivors, families, rescue workers, and others affected by the disaster.

The Alfred P. Murrah Building was imploded at 7:02 a.m., Tuesday, May 23rd. The three remaining victims were found where predicted.

On June 11-13, 125 local, state and federal response partners met in Oklahoma City to discuss the disaster and make recommendations for improved response. The Oklahoma Department of Civil Emergency Management (ODCEM) participated in this review and results of the conference are on file at FEMA's headquarters in Washington, D.C.

From the time of the blast, through the building implosion, Oklahoma City Police received no reports of looting or price gouging. Additionally, it should be noted that there was no evidence of individuals attempting to profit from the disaster, i.e., T-shirt and paraphernalia sales, etc. For this, all Oklahomans should be commended.

Throughout the event, ODCEM utilized a full-time staff of 25 to maintain 24-hour operations (a 4/19/95 Staff Roster is provided in Exhibit H). Since that time, six of the 25 have left the department, yet all should be commended for their determined efforts under extreme conditions.

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In Closing

The purpose for the production of this document is to provide an overview of the disaster, identifying actions taken, operational strengths and lessons learned. The Oklahoma City Bombing is an event which is unique to the state and nation. Throughout the United States, emergency services agencies and organizations are reviewing plans and procedures, based on the Oklahoma disaster. Because of this event, our state's personnel and agencies/organizations, which had direct involvement in the response and recovery missions, have an added responsibility to inform the nation of what happened, what worked and what could have been done better. The most important information in this document is located under the section "Lessons Learned". This is not meant to mean lessons learned from the operations outweighed the strengths. It simply means that appropriate personnel can learn more from problems and recommendations than from successes realized through existing procedures. This report is limited to an emergency management perspective. From this point of view, we have outlined seven rather generic items which we list as major lessons learned from this event.

They are as follows:

- 1) The "Heartland" of America is no longer isolated from the reaction of political action groups of either the extreme left or right;
- 2) The Integrated Emergency Management System (IEMS) works best when all functions are in place;
- 3) The Federal Response Plan needs to be modified to incorporate the response activities and missions of Federal Law Enforcement Agencies;
- 4) State and local plans and exercises need to be changed to incorporate response forces working in and around a crime scene;
- 5) State and local plans should mirror the Federal and Regional Response Plans with additional emergency support functions added to fit the state and local situation;
- 6) A need exists for national and regional integrated training between federal, state and local emergency management, fire and law enforcement services, in managing the consequences of terrorism incidents; and,
- 7) A federal, state and local cooperative partnership is essential for successful response and recovery operations, following a catastrophic disaster.

As previously stated, these seven observations serve as merely umbrella headings to many planning and procedural modifications which should be examined by emergency management organizations at all levels of government, prior to the next

similar event. There is no doubt that the response/recovery missions achieved by federal, state, local and voluntary organizations, pursuant to the bombing, should and will be viewed as a successful operation. However, if the knowledge and experience gained from this disaster remains docile in the minds of those involved, the probability of future successful operations will not increase. It is for this reason that this report is provided.

Much time has passed since the day which will be benchmarked as a period which illustrated the very best and very worst mankind has to offer. Consequently, much has been done to honor those who served. This is appropriate because actions completed by these men and women were done so under extraordinary circumstances and conditions. The last survivor of the blast was pulled from the rubble at 10:05 p.m. the first day, yet determination and motivation remained high for 16 more days, under less than ideal conditions.

However, there is but one fact, alone, which supersedes all others concerning this disaster. On the 19th of April, 1995, 168 people lost their lives for no reason. This shall never be forgotten.

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# The Oklahoma Department of Civil Emergency Management

## After Action Report

### Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building Bombing

19 April 1995 1995 in Oklahoma City,  
Oklahoma

### Detailed Summary of Daily Activity

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Daily Summary, Introduction and Log Entries for April 19 09:02 CDT - April 25

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The following text is a compilation of significant events and log entries related to the April 19th bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building. This information has



been extracted from the Oklahoma Department of Civil Emergency Management's Emergency Information System (EIS), a computerized emergency management system utilized at the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC). This text identifies only the major developments concerning the disaster. It does not identify every action taken and requested at the SEOC. Times, where provided, are done so to adequately illustrate the sequence of events which occurred. Each is consistent with ODCEM records, though they might not coincide precisely with after-action reports constructed by other agencies.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 1995

0902 HRS: An explosion occurs in downtown Oklahoma City at the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building. Oklahoma City Fire Station One responds immediately, reacting to the sound. Fire, emergency medical, and law enforcement personnel, American Red Cross Disaster workers, and civilians, enter the bombed structure without delay as they immediately initiate a massive search and rescue effort.

0904: The explosion is reported to the Oklahoma Department of Civil Emergency Management (ODCEM) by staff in the field. State agency liaison officers are requested to report to the SEOC immediately.

0907: The Oklahoma County Chapter of the American Red Cross responds to the incident, followed shortly by the local Salvation Army unit. Each begins immediate services to victims, as well as initial assessment of the situation.

0920: The ODCEM Disaster Recovery Manager is dispatched to the scene. State agency liaison officers begin arriving at the SEOC.

0925: The SEOC is fully operational and State Director Tom Feuerborn orders 24-hour operations until further notice. Selected staff are sent home to report for the second shift beginning at 2400. Agencies initially represented in the SEOC include:

- ODCEM
- The Oklahoma Department of Public Safety
- The Oklahoma Military Department
- The Oklahoma Department of Human Services
- The Oklahoma Department of Health
- The Oklahoma Department of Education
- The National Weather Service
- The Civil Air Patrol

0930: The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region VI, in Denton, Texas, is notified of the incident and immediately activates the Regional Operations Center (ROC).

0945: Governor Frank Keating orders a "State of Emergency" and releases all non-essential state employees, in the Oklahoma City area, as a safety measure.

1000: The National Weather Service (NWS) reports that weather will deteriorate over the next six hours.

1005: Governor Keating and selected staff arrive at the SEOC and receive an initial situation briefing from Director Feuerborn.

1015: ODCEM Forward Operations reports a "bomb scare" at the site, resulting in the relocation of the Incident Command Post (ICP) to the southwest corner of N.W. 8th St. and Harvey Avenue.

1030: The ODCEM Exercise Training Officer arrives at the ICP to supplement forward operations.

1035: FEMA Regional Director Buddy Young reports to Director Feuerborn that FEMA National Headquarters, in Washington D.C., has been briefed on the situation and Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Task Forces from Phoenix, Arizona and Sacramento, California have been put on alert for immediate deployment to Oklahoma City.

1055: FEMA activates the Phoenix and Sacramento US&R Task Forces and begins organizing a list of additional US&R teams to supplement future efforts in Oklahoma City. Additionally, FEMA activates an Incident Support Team (IST), consisting of response specialists nationwide, to report to Oklahoma City and coordinate the efforts of incoming US&R teams.

1100: The FEMA Regional Director and selected staff deploy from Denton, Texas, en route to the SEOC.

1115: Due to limited space and approaching weather, the Incident Commander (IC) relocates the ICP to the southeast corner of N.W. 8th St. and Harvey Ave., in the parking lot of Southwestern Bell Telephone's Corporate Headquarters. Chained-link fencing is brought in to effectively cordon-off the area.

1150: Military medical personnel arrive to supplement the Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) with the triage mission at the site.

1200: With the aid of Oklahoma City officials, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) secures a building at 11 N.E. 6th St. to serve as a command post for investigative efforts by law enforcement agencies. Weldon Kennedy, of the Phoenix, Arizona office of the FBI, is named Special Agent-In-Charge and the incident is titled "OK BOMB".

1330: A temporary morgue is established in the First Methodist Church, N.W. 4th St. and Robinson Avenue.

1405: FEMA Regional Director and staff arrive at SEOC. A conference call is held with headquarters and FEMA's Mobile Emergency Response Support (MERS) is alerted to establish secure satellite communications at the FBI investigative center. The General Services Administration is asked to find adequate office space for the establishment of a Disaster Field Office (DFO). Director Feuerborn is advised that FEMA Director James Lee Witt will be arriving in Oklahoma City at 1930 HRS.

1530: The Office of the State Medical Examiner establishes a "Family Assistance Center" (a.k.a. "Compassion Center") at the First Christian Church, N.W. 36th St. and Walker Avenue. Security is provided by the Oklahoma County Sheriff's Office and the National Guard.

1600: President Clinton announces the signing of Emergency Declaration 3115-EM, which, under provisions of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, permits the federal government to provide emergency assistance to save lives, protect property, public health and safety, and to lessen or avert the threat of further damage. The declaration is specifically declared under the authority of Section 501 (b), which allows the President to provide immediate assistance for an "emergency involving primary federal responsibilities".

1630: Staffing pattern, consisting of Oklahoma City Police, Oklahoma County Sheriff's Office, Department of Public Safety and Oklahoma Military Department personnel, is established to cordon-off an 18-square-block area on a 24-hour basis.

1700: Director Feuerborn and Lt. Governor Fallin brief Oklahoma's Congressional delegation at the SEOC.

1830: The American Red Cross opens a shelter for victims displaced by the explosion. Local hospitals report 472 injured and admitted or treated and released.

2010: FEMA Director Witt and staff arrive at the SEOC.

2205: The last survivor of the explosion is removed from the rubble.

2245: The Phoenix US&R Task Force arrives at the site.

2300: The Sacramento US&R Task Force arrives.

2335: The ODCEM Forward Operations personnel are relieved at the site and return to the SEOC to brief the State Director, Governor and his staff.

#### THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 1995

0004 HRS: American Red Cross completes survey of area hospitals and reports 702 disaster victims seen.

0100: Oklahoma City Fire Department reports completion of their primary search, including all of the Murrah Building still standing, third floor and above.

0200: FEMA MERS arrives to support FBI and other response agencies. They locate at the FBI Investigative Headquarters, 11 N.E. 6th Street. Additionally, a Disaster Mortuary Team (DMORT), provided by Public Health Services, arrives to support the Medical Examiner's Office.

0554: National Weather Service reports improving weather through Friday, with mostly sunny skies.

0659: Southwestern Bell Telephone completes the installation of a mobile cellular site in downtown Oklahoma City, to accommodate high-traffic use.

0730: Agent Kennedy conducts his first inter-agency staff meeting for law enforcement officers involved in the investigative mission of the disaster. He makes it clear that priorities are as follows: 1. locate any survivors; 2. remove any victims; and, 3. process the crime scene.

0900: An initial media briefing is held at the Oklahoma City Civic Center Music Hall's "Hall of Mirrors".

From this point on, daily events will be denoted by a square, rather than a time entry.

- Portable X-Ray equipment and trained staff are deployed from University Hospital to the Medical Examiner's Office.
- Critical Incident Stress Debriefings (CISDs) are established for rescue workers and Governor Keating announces the implementation of a 24-hour, statewide hotline to provide counseling support for victims and families of those involved in the bombing.

- An evidence collection warehouse is established at 101 N.W. 4th Street.
- Five hundred fifty (550) body bags arrive from Dallas, Texas and Memphis, Tennessee.
- The Myriad Convention Center becomes the designated location to house additional US&R Teams responding to the disaster. The Oklahoma Restaurant Association establishes 24-hour feeding operations, at the Myriad, to accommodate all rescue workers.
- American Red Cross President Elizabeth Dole arrives in Oklahoma City to tour the bomb site and monitor ARC operations.
- US&R Task Forces from Virginia Beach, Virginia, and New York City, New York, arrive in Oklahoma City and begin 12-hour, alternating shifts with the Phoenix and Sacramento teams.
- Federal Coordinating Officer Dell Greer arrives in Oklahoma City and requests General Services Administration (GSA) support in identifying a location to establish a Disaster Field Office (DFO). Additionally, the following Emergency Support Functions (ESFs), identified in the Federal Response Plan, are activated for the operation:
  - ESF 2 Communications
  - ESF 3 Public Works and Engineering
  - ESF 4 Firefighting
  - ESF 5 Information and Planning
  - ESF 6 Mass Care
  - ESF 7 Resource Support
  - ESF 8 Health and Medical Services
  - ESF 9 Urban Search and Rescue
- FEMA requests the Department of Defense (DOD), through appointed Defense Coordinating Officer (DCO) Col. Stuart Bornhoft, provide six C-141 Starlifter Transports in support of the operation.
- Oklahoma First Lady Cathy Keating announces a Statewide Prayer Service to be held at 3:00 p.m., Sunday, April 23rd, at the Oklahoma State Fairgrounds.

#### FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 1995

- The two-man, ODCM forward operations day team is reduced to one, as the Disaster Recovery Manager assumes his responsibilities as the State Coordinating Officer of the disaster.
- The Oklahoma State Health Department inspects the State Medical Examiner's Office for possible biological contamination and finds M.E. procedures acceptable. They also, work with the Oklahoma City Fire Department to identify a disinfectant which can be sprayed on bodies to control bacteria and odor.
- The American Red Cross reports 68 individuals were housed at St. Luke's Methodist Church on Thursday night. ARC also advises numerous Disaster

Welfare Inquiries have been received. Through these inquiries, ARC reports 711 victims accounted for and 167 victims missing.

- US&R Task Forces arrive from Montgomery County, Maryland, and Los Angeles County, California, to support efforts of the four prior teams.
- At the request of Oklahoma City, ODCM and FEMA agree to assist in the establishment of a Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC), at the Myriad Convention Center, where local response efforts and resources can be coordinated. Additionally, the decision is made to establish a Joint Information Center (JIC), within the MACC, where public information and media inquiries can be coordinated.
- Oklahoma Military Department supports in the transfer of a suspect from Perry, Oklahoma, to Oklahoma City.

#### SATURDAY, APRIL 22, 1995

- Heavy rain and high winds slow search and rescue operations throughout the day.
- U.S. Speaker of the House of Representatives Newt Gingrich takes an early morning tour of the bomb site, escorted by FEMA Director Witt and representatives of the Governor's office.
- The MACC, located in the Myriad Convention Center, becomes operational. Personnel at the MACC include representatives of Oklahoma City departments, Emergency Medical Services Authority, Oklahoma County Emergency Management, Forward Operations for ODCM, FEMA advisors, the National Weather Service, the American Red Cross and technical advisors from the U.S. Forestry Service.
- The Disaster Field Office (DFO) begins operation at 420 W. Main St. In this facility both the Federal and State Coordinating Officers locate with their technical staffs and work the response, long-term recovery and administrative aspects of the disaster. Additionally, a Congressional Liaison Office is established at the DFO to coordinate inquiries from U.S. Senators and Representatives.
- The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) establishes a declaration for disaster damage applications.
- The FEMA Donations Coordination Support Team arrives at the DFO.
- FEMA's Office of Emergency Information and Public Affairs begin periodic satellite transmissions of pool video shot by US&R team members inside the Murrah Building.
- The Regional Operation Center (ROC), in Denton, Texas, closes. Future federal resource support will be coordinated through the DFO.
- US&R Task Forces from Fairfax County, Virginia, and Metro Dade County, Florida, arrive in Oklahoma City to supplement the efforts of the six previous teams.

- The U.S. Public Health Service establishes a medical support unit to provide assistance to the Disaster Mortuary Team (DMORT). The Oklahoma City Veterans Administration Hospital is tasked to provide logistical support to the DMORT. The DMORT meets with city, county and state health officials periodically, to provide updates. Also, 30 volunteer morticians, from the Oklahoma Funeral Directors Association, provide support to the DMORT, the Medical Examiner's Office and the Family Assistance Center.
- The 61st Explosive Ordnance Disposal Unit completes inspection of the bomb site. No additional explosive devices are found.

SUNDAY, APRIL 23, 1995

- Rescue efforts proceed slowly due to the instability of the Murrah Building. Rain, lightening and wind hamper search efforts. Secondary searches of surrounding buildings continue. The structural integrity of the federal courthouse and U.S. Post Office are determined to be safe.
- An Emergency Survivor Injury Registry is initiated by the Oklahoma Health Department, with assistance provided by the Center for Disease Control. The registry assists officials in victim identification and in documenting injuries and any on-going medical needs.
- The possibility of bacterial contamination continues to be a concern at the bomb site. Five hundred (500) saranex-coated TYVEK suits are ordered, through FEMA, for use by personnel at the scene.
- At the MACC, the Joint Information Center (JIC), consisting of public information specialists from all levels of government, becomes operational.
- FEMA approves "Immediate Needs" crisis counseling funds of \$142,350 to assist the state in providing counseling services. These funds are transferred to the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse for program administration.
- An In-Kind Donations Coordination Team is established at the DFO, consisting of representatives of FEMA, ODCM and voluntary organizations. The team's functional responsibilities are outlined as follows:
  - Process information provided by FEMA's toll-free donations hotline.
  - Establish a single, coordinated, unmet needs list.
  - Provide direct communication with the MACC.
  - Address the management of spontaneous volunteers.
  - Provide a liaison to the local business community.
  - Share information concerning warehouse space and current inventory.
- The American Red Cross assumes responsibility of the residents of the Regency Tower, who are currently relocated at the Best Western Trade Winds Motel, E. I-40 and Martin Luther King Boulevard. The ARC opens a service center at the motel and works with each displaced family on an individual basis of need.

- The 16-person, 54th Quartermaster Graves Registration Unit, from Ft. Lee, Virginia, arrives in Oklahoma City to support the Medical Examiner's Office at the temporary morgue, located in the First Methodist Church, N.W. 4th St. and Robinson Avenue.
- More than 40,000 people converge at the Oklahoma State Fairgrounds for the Prayer Service, attended by President and Mrs. Clinton, Governor and Mrs. Keating, and Mayor and Mrs. Norick. The Reverend Billy Graham provides the inspirational message.

#### MONDAY, APRIL 24, 1995

- Weather improves for the rescue workers at the site. Shoring of the structure continues and areas along the base of the structure, in which victims are thought to be located, take on familiar names, such as the pit, the bowl, the forrest, the crater and the cave. In support of the Oklahoma City Fire Department, US&R Task Forces continue 24-hour operations, with four teams alternating during the day and two at night.
- US&R Task Forces from Menlo Park, California, and Puget Sound, Washington, arrive in Oklahoma City. Teams from Sacramento, California, and Phoenix, Arizona, demobilize.
- ODCM and FEMA personnel conduct a preliminary applicant's briefing for Oklahoma City officials, outlining long-term recovery issues and potential funding sources.
- A Biohazard Risk Assessment Team completes its one-day site visit to advise on biological and chemical hazards. They relate the appropriate use of protective equipment and the related health and safety issues to rescue workers.
- Structural shifting is detected at the temporary morgue (First Methodist Church) and the possibility of relocation is discussed. The decision is made to have engineers constantly monitor the situation and report if relocation becomes necessary.
- An additional full-body X-Ray machine is obtained through FEMA to support efforts of the Medical Examiner's Office.
- The SBA announces that local business owners, who are currently unable to access their structure, could be able to receive some temporary financial assistance.
- People who have vehicles parked outside the interior perimeter are allowed to claim their automobiles through the Oklahoma City Police Department.
- FEMA daily situation reports are made available to the public through the internet.

#### TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 1995



- The search and rescue mission remains constant, but proceeds slowly due to the massive piles of debris and continuing concern over the structural integrity of the building. In many instances the mission is interrupted until additional shoring measures can be implemented.
- Two firefighters sustain injuries while working at the scene. One, an Oklahoma City firefighter, is transported to St. Anthony's Hospital where he is treated and released. The other, a Nichols Hills firefighter, is treated at the scene and released for duty.
- Lt. Governor Mary Fallin participates in a Donations Coordination Team meeting held at the DFO. From the meeting, a joint voluntary agency media release is developed reflecting the position that there is no longer a need for mass quantities of goods or volunteers.
- Oklahoma City, ODCM and FEMA staff perform a joint Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) of the affected area surrounding the Murrah Building. The purpose of the PDA is to identify specific federal assistance and programs necessary to return the damaged structures and victims as closely as possible to pre-disaster condition.
- Specialists from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers supplement efforts concerning structural integrity and blast damage distribution.
- The General Services Administration (GSA) conducts surveys necessary to find temporary and permanent office space for the federal agencies previously housed in the Murrah Building.
- Defense Coordinating Officer Bornhoft coordinates a photographic fly-over of the disaster area to assist in the investigative effort. The mission is achieved by an Oklahoma Air National Guard C-130.
- Governor Keating requests the President declare a major disaster for Oklahoma City and provide Federal Individual Assistance in the form of Temporary Housing, Low-Interest Loans, Disaster Unemployment and Individual and Family Grants. A request for Federal Public Assistance (i.e. infrastructure damages, emergency labor and materials) will be made at a later date since most of these damages are currently covered under the Presidential Emergency Declaration (FEMA-3115-EM) at a 100% federal share.

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#### Daily Summary, Log Entries for April 26 - May 23

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 1995

- The one-week anniversary of the explosion is observed at the site as Governor and Mrs. Keating, Lt. Governor Fallin and Mayor and Mrs. Ron Norick lead the rescue workers in a one-minute moment of silence at exactly 9:02 a.m.

- Search and rescue efforts continue with emphasis concentrated on the "pit" area of the building (central-interior location), where debris is heavy and victims are believed to be located. Six US&R Task Forces remain on rotating duty as the New York City and Virginia Beach teams demobilize.
- Four firefighters from Midwest City and six from Tinker Air Force Base provide continuous decontamination support to the rescue workers.
- National Guardsmen, provided by the Oklahoma Military Department, initiate an evidentiary sifting mission through rubble transported to the Oklahoma County Sheriff's gun range. This mission is tasked at the request of the FBI.
- From previous donations coordinations meetings, a Donations Task Force is identified and an organizational meeting is held at the DFO. Represented at the meeting are Lt. Governor Fallin, the Federal Coordinating Officer, State Coordinating Officer, Oklahoma City officials, the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, FEMA's donations specialists, the FEMA Voluntary Agency Coordinator, the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, Feed the Children, Adventist Community Services, the Oklahoma Restaurant Association and Americorps. The task force is presented with two separate issues to address: 1. Items needed by individuals and families affected by the blast, and the workers supporting them; and, 2. Items needed by individuals and organizations working within the blast area. It is emphasized that the task force is not challenged with meeting the long-term needs of victims nor the donated funds which have been arriving from around the world, since the explosion.
- Two bomb dog teams arrive in Oklahoma City to support the U.S. Marshal's Service in providing security at the federal courthouse.
- The FBI releases the Regency Tower from the crime scene. Inspection of the building is completed and it is found to be structurally sound. Approximately 400 people resided in 260 apartment units at the time of the blast. Oklahoma City Metro Transit provides transportation to the displaced residents, who are allowed to enter the building and pick-up any essential items or possessions. (The Regency Tower residents were allowed to move back in after repairs were made on October 26, 1995)
- President Clinton signs Major Disaster Declaration FEMA-1048-DR, providing individual assistance to eligible applicants in Oklahoma City. The national teleregistration number is activated and victims are encouraged to apply. The Federal and State Coordinating Officers brief Oklahoma's Congressional Delegation on this development at the DFO.

THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 1995

- Rescue crews are temporarily removed from "the pit" area of the building as a concrete slab shift is detected. Engineers evaluate the situation and re-initiate the recovery operation. To date, only ten minor injuries have been sustained by rescue workers.

- Oklahoma City Public Works officials release their initial survey figures of the damaged area. Their assessment shows 312 structures sustaining some damage, 25 buildings with major structural damage and 10 buildings destroyed.
- The MACC is down-sized and relocated to the Oklahoma City Emergency Operations Center (EOC), 4600 Martin Luther King Boulevard. Emergency Support Function Three (ESF-3: Public Works and Engineering), ESF-9 (Urban Search and Rescue) and the Joint Information Center (JIC) move to the DFO. The remaining ESFs and ODCEM Forward Operations move to the Oklahoma City EOC.
- Americorps volunteers assist the Donations Coordination Team with warehouse inventory and goods reception at various sites.
- Through the aid of ODCEM and the Oklahoma Department of Central Services, FEMA and GSA locate a site to establish a Recovery Service Center (RSC), where applicants can visit one-on-one with representatives of various programs offering aid. The location is in Shepherd Mall, N.W. 23rd St. and Villa. Plans are made to open the RSC Saturday, April 29th, but GSA and SBA immediately relocate to handle administrative functions and assist with previously disbursed loan applications. The American Red Cross makes plans the move their service center to this location and the Oklahoma Baptists plan to establish a child-care facility to aid in the assistance process.
- By close of business, 250 individuals have applied for disaster assistance through FEMA's teleregistration service.

#### FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 1995

- The Menlo Park US&R Task Force completes securing overhead hazards (large concrete slabs) on the north and east sections of the building. Crews continue working in "the pit" area, where several more victims are believed to be located. Continued removal of debris, while necessary, is believed to weaken the remaining structure. Numerous breaks are taken for constant engineering evaluation and additional shoring efforts.
- FEMA Director Witt and his staff meet with Governor Keating and ODCEM Director Feuerborn before departing to Washington, D.C.

#### SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 1995

- Several more victims are recovered from "the pit" area of the building. Additional debris is removed and hanging hazards secured. Cracks in two northern columns of the building are shored with steel banding and epoxy.
- The Orange County, California, US&R Task Force arrives in Oklahoma City as the Los Angeles County and Montgomery County teams are demobilized.
- Oklahoma City Fire Department disbands the Command Post at the Southwestern Bell Telephone Building.

- The RSC is fully operational at Shepherd Mall with personnel staffed to represent the following organizations/programs:

FEMA Disaster Housing  
 FEMA/State Individual and Family Grants  
 ODCEM  
 Oklahoma Employment Security Commission  
 American Red Cross  
 Oklahoma Department of Human Services/Aging  
 Salvation Army  
 Department of Area-wide Aging  
 SBA  
 Federal Employees Education & Assistance Fund  
 Social Security Administration  
 Veterans Administration  
 Internal Revenue Service  
 Oklahoma County  
 FEMA/State Public Affairs  
 Oklahoma State Insurance Commission

- A telephone bank is also provided for those who have yet to apply for assistance through the teleregistration service. A total of 23 media outlets visit the RSC during the first day of operation.
- Oklahoma Representatives J.C. Watts and Frank Lucas are briefed at the DFO and tour the Murrah Building.
- The owner, head coach and several members of the Dallas Cowboys football team visit the Myriad Convention Center, Family Assistance Center and area hospitals on a good will mission.

SUNDAY, APRIL 30, 1995

- A crane and dump truck are involved in an accident at the site, but no injuries occur.
- The MACC is down-sized once again and relocated to the Oklahoma City Fire Department Technical Logistics Center at 225 N.W. 6th St., in a covered garage. All FEMA support to the MACC is transferred to the DFO or demobilized. ODCEM Forward Operations remain in the MACC.
- The U.S. Public Health Service's "Disaster Studies Health Group" begin collecting documentation concerning patients treated after the explosion.
- California Congressman Jerry Lewis is briefed at the DFO and bomb site, and visits Governor Keating and ODCEM Director Feuerborn.

MONDAY, MAY 1, 1995

- Operations at the site officially transition to a recovery mission. Work is continued by hand and with the limited use of heavy equipment, but is suspended several times due to inclement weather conditions.
- US&R Task Forces from Fairfax County and Metro Dade County are demobilized. Prior to leaving, the Metro Dade County Team presents the YMCA with \$1,000 to replace damaged playground equipment.

#### TUESDAY, MAY 2, 1995

- Recovery operations concentrate on the "bowl" area, as structural engineers monitor the situation closely for signs of shifting. Due to unpredictable spring weather, a growing concern for the safety of the workers and the newly emphasized recovery mission, operations for the day are limited to an 0600 - 1800 HRS time frame.
- US&R Task Forces from Menlo Park and Puget Sound are demobilized, leaving Orange County as the only team remaining. At 1800 HRS the decision is made to halt all US&R support, but to keep technical specialists on until May 6 to act in an advisory capacity to Oklahoma City Fire Department.
- All rescue/recovery efforts are expected to be completed by Friday, May 5, at which time the site will be turned over to the FBI and restricted to investigative personnel only.
- The 54th Quartermaster Graves Registration Unit is released.
- All Mobile Emergency Response Support (MERS) personnel and equipment, except logistical support, are released by 2400 HRS.

#### WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 1995:

- All rescue/recovery operations at the site are being conducted by Oklahoma City Fire Department, as the US&R Task Force from Orange County demobilizes. Prior to departure, the Orange County Team presents an orange tree and plaque to Oklahoma City officials.
- The Oklahoma Military Department completes its sifting mission at the Oklahoma County Sheriff's gun range.
- Governor Keating requests the inclusion of Public Assistance (i.e., infrastructure damages) in Presidential Major Disaster Declaration FEMA-1048-DR-OK.
- By late afternoon, applications for disaster assistance total 968. Temporary Housing checks issued to date total \$408,696 and the Small Business Administration has distributed 496 loan applications.

#### THURSDAY, MAY 4, 1995:

- Recovery work continues at the site, conducted totally by Oklahoma City Fire Department. The General Services Administration (GSA) requests engineering

support to monitor the structure after the rescue/recovery mission is completed. Two structural engineers from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Tulsa District, assume this mission and relieve engineers currently supporting the recovery operation.

- The American Red Cross Family Services, Health Services and Mental Health Divisions form a "compassion team", designed to contact families of the deceased and all others who were directly victimized by the disaster.

#### FRIDAY, MAY 5, 1995:

- At 0005 HRS the Oklahoma City Fire Department officially halts all recovery operations at the site. It is believed that three bodies remain in the rubble, but due to their perceived location, structural engineers feel that the safety factor is too great to pursue their recovery until after the implosion of the building.
- Rescue/recovery workers gather at the site for a memorial service, closed to the media.
- The FEMA Disaster Mortuary Team (DMORT) completes its mission for the State Medical Examiner's Office and is deactivated.
- Responsibility of the Family Assistance Center, at First Christian Church, is transferred to the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. The center, through federal funding efforts, becomes "Project Heartland", a program designed to meet the long-term needs of victims. ("Project Heartland" eventually relocates to 5500 N. Western Ave., where it remains at the date of this report.)
- President Clinton approves the inclusion of Public Assistance in Major Disaster Declaration FEMA-1048-DR-OK.

#### SATURDAY, MAY 6, 1995:

- Training and demobilization of the FEMA Donations Team continues, with emphasis placed on returning donated goods to the original donor.
- Operations of the Defense Coordinating Office are transferred to Ft. Sill, Oklahoma.

#### SUNDAY, MAY 7, 1995:

- Recovery activities continue.

#### MONDAY, MAY 8, 1995:

- All Emergency Support Function (ESF) operations are transferred from the Disaster Field Office (DFO) to FEMA Region VI, in Denton, Texas.

- A consortium of 15 religious organizations is established, known as "Interfaith Disaster Recovery of Greater Oklahoma City", to better meet the needs of disaster victims.
- The Recovery Service Center reports 889 visitors, to date. Individual Assistance registrations total 1,242 and SBA reports 715 loan applications issued. The American Red Cross and the Individual and Family Grant Program are working together to meet the funeral/medical expense needs of victims.

#### TUESDAY, MAY 9, 1995:

- After conferring with state and local officials, the General Services Administration (GSA) determines the best way to raze the remains of the Murrah Building is by implosion. GSA proceeds to make arrangements, contracts and proposes a date for the pending event.
- A Federal Building Performance Team arrives in Oklahoma City to study the effects of the blast and make recommendations to mitigate damages from similar events. The team is comprised of representatives from FEMA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, GSA, the American Society of Civil Engineers, the National Institute of Standards and Technology and support contractors. The team is briefed by GSA officials on the status of the structure, but access is prohibited, due to safety factors.
- The donations distribution site at the U.S. Post Office, northwest corner of N.W. 5th and Harvey Ave., is closed.
- A Public Assistance Applicants' Briefing is held at the Oklahoma Historical Society Auditorium to educate potential applicants on the intricacies of the federal-state program.

#### WEDNESDAY, MAY 10, 1995:

- Recovery activities continue.

#### THURSDAY, MAY 11, 1995:

- The Recovery Service Center reports 1,368 registrations and 1,205 visitors, to date. SBA has issued loan applications to 542 individuals and 243 businesses.

#### FRIDAY, MAY 12, 1995:

- GSA selects the bid of a Maryland-based demolition company to implode the Murrah Building. A date has yet to be announced.
- The FEMA Voluntary Agency Coordinator holds the first Unmet Needs Committee meeting with key members from the Voluntary Agencies Active in Disasters (VOAD) group. Within a few weeks the group of approximately 20 agencies and funds grows to more than 80. (The group is renamed the

Oklahoma City Bombing Disaster Resource Coordination Committee and continues to meet weekly. The committee is continuing to develop a long-term recovery network, in cooperation with the National Association of Social Workers, Oklahoma Chapter, to constantly address victim, survivor, family and disaster workers' long-term needs. Additionally, FEMA, working in conjunction with the Department of Justice, U.S. Attorney's Office, is continuing the long-term recovery process by identifying issues that could be resolved by federal assistance.)

- The Recovery Service Center reports 655 Disaster Housing applications issued to verification inspectors with 594 of the inspections completed and processed. Disaster Housing payments, to date, total \$547,951.

SATURDAY, MAY 13, 1995:

- Recovery activities continue.

SUNDAY, MAY 14, 1995:

- Recovery activities continue.

MONDAY, MAY 15, 1995:

- FEMA representatives and Feed the Children volunteers assist Regency Tower residents with the packing and moving of personal property so reconstruction of the building can begin.
- A meeting, coordinated by the United Way of Oklahoma City, is held for families who had children at the Murrah Building day-care center. Individuals are encouraged to talk with FEMA and voluntary agency representatives about their immediate and long-term needs.

TUESDAY, MAY 16, 1995:

- It is determined that at the time of the explosion 260 units of the Regency Tower were occupied, 72 of which still need to be vacated prior to reconstruction. By close of business, only 15 units have items which have yet to be moved or are under contract to be moved.
- Due to decreased activity, representatives from the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Oklahoma County and Feed the Children relocate from the Recovery Service Center to their appropriate headquarters. Arrangements are made with Feed the Children to provide transportation for Regency Tower victims from the Trade Winds and Central Plaza motels to the Recovery Service Center.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 17, 1995:



- Recovery activities continue.

THURSDAY, MAY 18, 1995:

- A Public Assistance meeting is held between ODCM, FEMA and the Oklahoma City YMCA. The meeting is designed to determine eligibility of the non-profit organization, however, the YMCA reports it has accepted an insurance settlement and additional assistance is unnecessary.

FRIDAY, MAY 19, 1995:

- Disaster victims making application through FEMA's National Teleregistration Center are advised that, due to computer problems, no individual control numbers will be issued for three to five days. This creates a significant problem since voluntary agencies use the control number to identify duplication of benefits, etc. FEMA is working to correct the malfunction, but asks the voluntary agencies to proceed in their efforts without the control number.
- The Donations Management Team ceases operations at the DFO. Future inquiries/activities will be coordinated through United Way personnel, located at the Recovery Service Center.

SATURDAY, MAY 20, 1995:

- Recovery activities continue.

SUNDAY, MAY 21, 1995:

- Recovery activities continue.

MONDAY, MAY 22, 1995:

- Recovery activities continue.

TUESDAY, MAY 23, 1995:

- At 0702 HRS the remains of the Alfred P. Murrah Building are imploded. In the next few days, the bodies of the three remaining victims are located, precisely where they were believed to be. This brings the final death count to 168, including the Oklahoma City nurse who responded to the incident and was mortally wounded when struck in the head by a piece of debris.
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# The Oklahoma Department of Civil Emergency Management

## After Action Report

### Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building Bombing

19 April 1995 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

### Operational Strengths

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The operational strengths subsequent to the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building are presented herein under the headings: I. Major Reasons the Operation Ran Smoothly; and, II. Additional Strengths Observed. It should be noted that the response/recovery challenges faced during the Oklahoma City Bombing are unique to any disaster operation the United States has encountered, to date. It would be impossible to document every positive response/recovery effort performed during this tragedy, therefore, only a few, significant strengths are outlined. A strong point of emphasis should be noted when reviewing this section and the next, dealing with lessons learned. The response/recovery missions performed during the Oklahoma City Bombing will and should always be considered a "total success". The following observations are presented for consideration during future operations.

#### I. MAJOR REASONS THE OPERATION RAN SMOOTHLY

1. The disaster occurred in Oklahoma City, where there was a strong state and federal government presence.
2. The disaster occurred in a jurisdiction which possesses an abundance of emergency resources.
3. The intense search and rescue mission was limited to a relatively small, confined area.
4. Damages were limited to a mostly non-residential section of the city.
5. Cooperation between local, state and federal government was unparalleled.

6. Strong executive leadership and common concerns were displayed at all levels of government.

7. Every person involved in the response/recover operation possessed a personal interest in the event. All were victims.

8. "THE OKLAHOMA STANDARD" Simply defined, The Oklahoma Standard represents the greatest asset our state offers..."Our People"

## II. ADDITIONAL STRENGTHS OBSERVED

- Unquestionable responsiveness, teamwork, and caring incurred on the part of all first responders.
- The American Red Cross and other voluntary organizations' response was immediate and continues to meet the needs of all those affected by the disaster.
- The National Weather Service (NWS) was instrumental in providing timely and accurate weather data to those overseeing the rescue/recovery effort. The three-hour, short-term weather forecasts should continue to be a standard, provided by NWS to the Incident Command Post, during any major emergency/disaster.
- Once the Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC) was established, a good exchange of information began to evolve between ODCEM Forward Operations Officers and the Tinker Air Force Base Fire Department, the Oklahoma National Guard, the Oklahoma City Public Works, the Oklahoma County Emergency Operations Center and their Emergency Management staff, the Oklahoma City Fire Department and the National Weather Service.
- Communication support from Cellular One, Southwestern Bell, et al, was superb.
- Unlike many of the agencies at the scene, the Oklahoma Highway Patrol could talk directly with personnel from Oklahoma-based federal agencies, including the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), FBI and the U.S. Marshal's Service. They have a pre-determined disaster plan in place, and part of that plan calls for the use of compatible radios and systems. A Department of Public Safety technician was able to program radios within 45 minutes. The Mobile Command Posts were indispensable for effective on-site communications. To coordinate communications among the multiple agencies, the Oklahoma Highway Patrol used their trunking capability to assign different sub-fleets for different functions to different public-safety agencies, if they were equipped with 800MHz trunking system radios.
- Oklahoma City provided adequate space and resources for the establishment of the two Multi-Agency Coordination Centers (MACCs).
- Many officials indicated that city, county, state and federal response procedures for this incident would become a model for the future. Urban Search and Rescue Task Force members commented regularly that they had never been

treated so well before, and that the care and compassion they received while here had become the standard -- **"The Oklahoma Standard"**

- Security procedures were quickly established to limit access to the Incident Command Post area, inner perimeter and outer perimeter.
- The Oklahoma City Police Department had an Emergency Response Team (ERT), established two years prior to the incident. They have trained monthly and added a new mobile command post to their cadre of response equipment.
- Forty-seven ambulance services, 103 ambulance units, and 384 emergency medical personnel participated in the bombing incident. Some units were already in Oklahoma City, transporting patients from their jurisdiction. Subsequently, they stayed to assist, once their patients were delivered to their appropriate destination. Other services were called in for mutual aid, to assist in or take care of the routine calls. Others were asked to provide back-up for communities, so that closer ambulances could respond, while others responded to the numerous media requests for assistance.
- A sophisticated piece of equipment used to search for survivors in the Murrah Building was the "Life Detector", a listening device used to locate a conscious person trapped under rubble. Search and rescue personnel would then use a bullhorn to instruct victims to tap rhythmically on a large piece of concrete or steel.
- Another piece of technology used in the Murrah Building was the "System To Locate Survivors" (STOLS), a specialized search camera system. Operators would wear a 21-pound monitor strapped to their chest to view images transmitted from a probe via a fiber-optic cable. The probe, which is two inches in diameter and carries a camera and microphone on the end, can be extended up to 79 inches into a structure through bored holes or cracks. The camera can be articulated to allow for up to a 180-degree view. The operators wore headphones to enable them to hear inside the crevice.
- The immediate response by Oklahoma City's fire, police and emergency medical personnel and other area fire, police and emergency medical personnel was phenomenal. Personnel and apparatus appeared at a moment's notice, willing to do whatever it took and work as long as it took to achieve the search and rescue mission.
- The Oklahoma City Bombing should be viewed as ultimate proof that the Incident Command System works.
- Operational strengths exhibited by ODCM include the following:
  - 1) Operational personnel responded to the site and made contact with the IC within the first 30 minutes.
  - 2) The SEOC was fully operational with liaison officers in-place within the first hour.

- 3) Back-up communications were in-place and utilized to make initial contact with FEMA.
- 4) Personnel recall was immediate and 24-hour operations were maintained by a full-time staff of 25 for the next 17 days.
- 5) Volunteer resources were established prior to the bombing and utilized to supplement manpower capabilities for the duration of the operation.
- 6) Briefing reports were provided to the Governor at the beginning of each day, outlining the previous 24-hours' developments.
- 7) State personnel exhibited operational flexibility necessary to accommodate Oklahoma City with State resources and to request federal resources, in this unique disaster situation.

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## The Oklahoma Department of Civil Emergency Management

### After Action Report

### Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building Bombing

19 April 1995 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

### Lessons Learned

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The lessons learned subsequent to the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building are presented herein under the headings: I. Major Lessons Learned; II. Lessons Learned through Response/Recovery Operations; and, III. Lessons Learned from Other Agencies. A strong point of emphasis is necessary when reviewing the information contained herein. Regardless of whether all operations followed current emergency management doctrine, the response phase of this emergency was performed in a most professional, positive, caring, and safe manner. The following observations are presented for consideration during future operations.

## I. MAJOR LESSONS LEARNED

1. The "Heartland" of America is no longer isolated from the reaction of political action groups of either the extreme left or right.
  2. The Integrated Emergency Management System (IEMS) works best when all functions are in place.
  3. The Federal Response Plan needs to be modified to incorporate the response activities and missions of Federal Law Enforcement Agencies.
  4. State and local plans and exercises need to be changed to incorporate response forces working in and around a large crime scene.
  5. State and local plans should mirror the Federal and Regional Response Plans with additional emergency support functions added to fit the State and local situation.
  6. A need exists for National and Regional integrated training between Federal, State and local emergency management, fire and law enforcement services.
  7. A Federal, State and local cooperative partnership is essential for successful response and recovery operations following a catastrophic disaster.
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## II. LESSONS LEARNED THROUGH RESPONSE/RECOVERY OPERATIONS

*(Lessons learned under this heading will be addressed under the appropriate Emergency Support Function (ESF), as outlined by the Federal Response Plan.)*

### A. ESF #1 - TRANSPORTATION

Issues covered under "Lessons Learned from other Agencies"

### B. ESF #2 - COMMUNICATIONS

**Statement of Issue 1:** *Due to the initial chaos following the explosion and non-emergency services transmissions, communications capabilities from the disaster site and between response agencies were limited at best.*

**Discussion:** During the first 12 to 18 hours after the incident, standard and cellular phone circuits were overloaded, making it extremely difficult to communicate by telephone. Portable/mobile cellular sites were erected near the incident site to ease the stress on cellular circuits. This action in itself made it

much easier to seize a circuit, greatly enhancing cellular communications. However, other non-emergency communications traffic tied up standard phone lines making coordination efforts difficult at best. During the first few critical hours following the explosion, two-way radio proved to be the fastest and most efficient way to relay information back to dispatchers and request specific support.

Additionally, Oklahoma City Police Department indicated that they switched much of their communications to a common police channel, enabling them to better communicate with their personnel. This achieved a significant improvement with their internal operations; however, it left them isolated and unable to communicate and/or monitor activities of other responding law enforcement units or response agencies.

Cellular One (now known as AT&T Wireless Services) served as the catalyst for creation of the Oklahoma Disaster Preparedness Council in 1994. This council included top-level management and operations personnel from departments of municipal governments in the metropolitan area; Oklahoma County, State and Federal agencies, hospitals, and the media. Through the council, a directory of cellular telephone numbers of key personnel and facilities was created. Immediately after the bombing, Cellular One reconfigured their trunking system to provide priority service to those numbers listed in the directory.

**Recommendations:** Emergency plans should be reviewed and Agency Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) should be developed to provide for an effective communications system when responding to a catastrophic event of this nature. The activities of the Oklahoma Disaster Preparedness Council should be enhanced and expanded to other communities/agencies serviced by AT&T Wireless. Similar efforts should be initiated with other cellular telephone companies.

**Statement of Issue 2:** *Even though the SEOC provides adequate communications capabilities for most disasters experienced within the state, and the MACC was established to provide adequate capabilities for this event, logistics for transmissions (via telephone, radio or FAX machine) sometimes led to confusion and delays on action in each operations center.*

**Discussion:**

*At the MACC* - There were numerous telephones in the Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC). This being the case, when a phone would ring, everyone would check to determine if it was their phone which was ringing. Additionally, a "ring-down" telephone connected directly to the State EOC was

not always available to forward operations staff. This was asked for each time the forward element relocated, however, such a system was only installed when operations moved to the City EOC. It should be noted that a ring-down phone was already located at the City EOC and was repositioned to the operations area by the City Communications Officer.

*At the SEOC* - Pagers and cellular telephones do not work inside the State EOC. Antiquated communications equipment was unable to make immediate frequency changes for all of the influx of agencies involved. SEOC computer equipment was extremely slow and no computers were dedicated solely for the purpose of logging message traffic. There were also no electronic status boards.

**Recommendations:** A "ring-down" phone should be made available to ODCM staff wherever forward operations is located and visual notification devices should be placed on each phone and FAX machine in the SEOC to limit confusion and potential delays in action. Electronic status boards should be installed in the SEOC along with a passive antenna system which would allow pager and cellular phone use. As for computers and other communications equipment, short and long-term upgrade plans need to be established, including the need for dedicated computers for the purpose of message-logging, donated goods, etc.

### **C. ESF #3 - PUBLIC WORKS AND ENGINEERING**

Issues covered under "Lessons Learned from other Agencies"

### **D. ESF #4 - FIREFIGHTING**

The State did not have a firefighting mission in this event. Search and rescue operations were conducted locally and supplemented federally. Lessons learned on this activity should be covered by each level's After Action Report.

### **E. ESF #5 - INFORMATION AND PLANNING**

*(Command and operational issues will also be covered under this ESF)*

**Statement of Issue 1:** *The Integrated Emergency Management System (IEMS) and Incident Command System (ICS) were weakened early in the event due to the immediate response of numerous local, state and federal agencies, three separate locations of the Incident Command Post (ICP), within the first few hours, and the deployment of many Mobile Command Posts (MCPs), representing support agencies.*

**Discussion:** At the Incident Command Post (ICP), there were a minimum of seven (7) Mobile Command Posts (MCPs), representing various agencies, coordinating numerous support functions. While the search and rescue mission was always under the command of Oklahoma City Fire Department, the many MCPs produced fragmented information from which decisions could be made and actions tracked. This situation also led to confusion between agencies and



in some cases caused delayed action due to multiple chains through which a request was made. Additionally, any officials visiting the ICP had to check with a minimum of four MCPs to obtain the overall scope of the situation.

**Recommendations:** In reality, there was only one ICP at the Southwestern Bell Telephone parking lot, the post manned by the Oklahoma City Fire Department. Every other Mobile Command Post served simply as a forward operations unit for the agency which it represented. For the Integrated Emergency Management System to function properly, the following process needs to be adhered to:

- 1) The ICP is established immediately at an appropriate location with the Incident Commander (IC), representing local government\*, identified;

\* The term "Local Government" includes both City and County

- 2) All resources necessary to support the mission should be requested from the IC to the Local Emergency Operations or Coordination Center;

- 3) Resources requested which the local government cannot accommodate should be directed to the state, through the State Emergency Operations Center; and,

- 4) Resources requested which the state government cannot accommodate should be directed to the federal government, through the FEMA Regional Operations Center or the Disaster Field Office, if one is established.

Even though much has been stated concerning the unique response each level of government was forced to take in this event, the fact remains that Oklahoma City was in charge of the search and rescue mission from the time the bomb exploded until they deemed the mission completed. Therefore, there is no reason the IEMS process, detailed above, could not have been implemented.

**Statement of Issue 2:** *A general lack of knowledge by key individuals and agencies, concerning IEMS, disaster response/recovery planning and implementation, and emergency management functions in general, led to confusion and frustration among responding agencies at all levels of government.*

**Discussion:** There were some local, state and federal officials who did not have a clear understanding of the terms "emergency" or "disaster", nor the knowledge of the existence of a State or Federal Emergency Operations Plan. Many calls were placed to various state and federal agencies without the

necessary coordination. This slowed the responsiveness of these support organizations, since they had to back-track to conduct the required coordination consistent with established law.

**Recommendations:** When implemented at all levels of government, the Integrated Emergency Management System (IEMS), just as the Incident Command System (ICS), has been proven effective on numerous occasions, nationwide. However, the key to success of this system, or any system, is commitment by all levels of government. This can only be established through constant disaster planning, training and exercising. Oklahoma City does not currently agree with the IEMS, nor did they at the time of the bombing. While this is a local government prerogative, problems with future disaster situations will continue to arise when state and federal support are required.

**Statement of Issue 3:** *The establishment of the Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC) was necessary, given the circumstances concerning the response efforts following the Oklahoma City bombing. However, the MACC's function carried two separate definitions, depending solely on who you talked to. It was either: 1. A center where all appropriate agencies from all levels of government should relocate to provide coordination actions and expertise; or, 2. An Oklahoma City Emergency Operations Center where all city resources and information could be coordinated.*

**Discussion:** Since ODCEM utilized definition #2 in its activities, the following discussion points are to be taken with this fact in mind. The points are as follows:

1) When Oklahoma City decided to consolidate response support actions, city officials delegated implementation authority for the integrated emergency management system to FEMA Headquarters personnel. The city is not a funded Emergency Management Assistance (EMA) jurisdiction. The city's full-time Emergency Management Director position had been vacant for approximately 10 months prior to this incident. The city has a federally-funded EOC, however, it was converted to a 9-1-1 dispatch center several years ago, and city officials do not appear to have a clear understanding of the integrated emergency management system and the role of an EOC as a coordination center.

2) When Oklahoma City decided to consolidate response support actions, city officials refused to use the term EOC. Rather, the term Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC) was used. This caused some confusion at all levels relative to the terminology. In every respect, the MACC was an operational city EOC, augmented by federal and state personnel. Response coordination and exchange of information improved significantly when the

MACC was activated. However, the city should have been prepared to activate a coordination center earlier than it did. As a special note, city officials were not familiar with the role of the Disaster Field Office (DFO). City officials initially thought that DFO operations could be consolidated into the MACC, verses consolidating operations at a City EOC, State EOC and the DFO.

3) The ODCEM forward operations element moved from the State EOC to the Incident Command area, to the Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC), at the Myriad Convention Center, to the MACC, at the City 9-1-1 Center, and finally to the Fire Department Logistics area, where it was deactivated. Special note - There was also a DFO representative at the Fire Department Logistics Center during the same time in which ODCEM forward operations personnel were present. Based upon the circumstances, the city should have activated a coordination center within the first 24 hours of the incident, in one location, with the same phone numbers (not constantly changing), with city counterparts assigned as applicable, so that information and resource coordination could have been more stable and responsive.

4) City officials depended on FEMA representatives completely for MACC communications set-up and all automation support, i.e., FAX machines, computers, software, modems, copy machines, telephones, and telephone service. When the decision was made to consolidate response support activities, city officials indicated that necessary manpower, resources, experience and time were not available to perform this function. An Integrated Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and an established coordination center would have solved this problem.

**Recommendations:** Planning, training and exercising are the only feasible recommendations. If an integrated emergency management system is to be utilized and effective in future disasters, all levels of government must be on the same page of the book. Effective coordination cannot be achieved during the chaos following any disaster. Relationships must be established, plans written and tested, and procedures agreed upon. It is the responsibility of each level of government to see that these goals are met. Regardless of what our particular role is, our mission is the same..."to provide effective response and recovery through coordinated logistics, communications and information support systems".

**Statement of Issue 4:** *While ODCEM's plans and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are designed to meet "all hazards", the department's quantitative resources, such as manpower and equipment, have been developed to manage the state's common disasters, i.e., flooding, tornadoes, severe storms. From the Murrah Building Bombing emerged numerous internal*

*limitations and deficiencies, in both the logistics and operational categories. Each is detailed in the following discussion points.*

**Discussion:**

- 1) Initially, ODCEM Forward Operations did not have a fixed location from which to work. To enhance coordination responsiveness, it would be beneficial to expedite securing a fixed location for State Operations Officers to operate from. For this event, Forward EOC operations could have been located with the Department of Public Safety or the Oklahoma National Guard Mobile Command Posts, or preferably from a local Emergency Operations Center, if one had been established.
- 2) There were some problems coordinating information within the State EOC and State Forward Operations. Some State EOC personnel do not understand or realize how critical a responsive and accurate exchange of operational information is between forward operational personnel and the State EOC. Normal day-to-day operational procedures need to be reviewed and revised/changed when responding to emergency/disaster operations.
- 3) There was not enough state staff trained and familiar with State EOC operations/coordination procedures.
- 4) Due to the long-term commitment, many state agencies did not have a sufficient number of additional personnel trained in EOC Operations. While most agencies are adequately represented through the second or third liaison level, the length of this operation required personnel from the fourth, fifth or sixth tier. This incident was the first time the SEOC was activated longer than five days.
- 5) ODCEM personnel were overtaxed during this lengthy, 24-hour operation. This was further complicated when manpower was required to staff the forward element, the Disaster Field Office, and the Recovery Service Center.
- 6) The State EOC Operations Room (Bullpen) is not large enough to accommodate state staff and all of the agency liaison officers during an extended disaster operation.
- 7) During the first three days of the operation, fatality figures were obtained from the Incident Command Post. The Oklahoma City Fire Department quickly developed a body count procedure in which they would only "count a body" once it was actually removed from the incident structure. This was very helpful in ensuring that an accurate account was consistently maintained. Subsequent to an internal discussion, the Chief of Operations at the State Emergency

Operations Center, began to coordinate directly with the State Medical Examiner's Office to access this information.

8) As hospitals received injured victims from the bombing, accountability was superior, however, establishing a single clearinghouse for all casualty/injury/treatment reports to be FAX'd would have been extremely helpful.

9) The SEOC was omitted from the information loop, concerning donations management. Consequently, state personnel did not have ready access to knowledge of what donations/services were available, which could fill needs as they occurred.

**Recommendations:** Plans and procedures must be reviewed and updated to avoid these operational problems in the future. While it would be nice to solve manpower and equipment limitations, based on the needs of this disaster, fiscal responsibility must guide us to the more common event. However, these deficiencies can be mitigated by the development of a trained reservist staff and continued identification of resources needed to support this department. Additionally, the state needs a full-time Voluntary Agency Coordinator and donations management staff.

#### **F. ESF #6 - MASS CARE**

Issues covered under "Lessons Learned from other Agencies"

#### **G. ESF #7 - RESOURCE SUPPORT**

**Statement of Issue 1:** *During normal disaster operations, resources are defined as "manpower and equipment which can be obtained through governmental levels or purchased and/or leased from private industry, necessary to accommodate the needs of the disaster situation". Donated goods, on the other hand, are generally thought of as food, clothing, assorted goods and volunteers which arrive unsolicited, for the purpose of accommodating the needs of the individual victims. However, following the bombing, these generic definitions did not apply. There were literally thousands of items, ranging from specialized search and rescue equipment to hard-hats, which appeared in Oklahoma City from around the world. Needless to say, numerous problems were experienced with the management and storage of these resources/donated goods. These problems are further detailed in the following discussion points.*

#### **Discussion:**

1) Oklahoma City had no method of identifying resources or managing the staging area, on 8th Street or along Robinson Ave., during the first two days of the event. They did not appear to have the manpower nor an individual or city department, identified in advance to handle this problem. Property accountability at the staging areas and donated goods accountability were

virtually non-existent during the major portion of the incident. City officials indicated that necessary manpower, experience and time were not available to conduct these operations. City officials asked FEMA personnel to perform these duties. Implementation of an effective Donations Management Program is imperative at the state and local level.

2) In-kind donations management was non-existent during the initial days of this incident. In a catastrophic incident of this proportion, the local jurisdiction should establish an in-kind donations management team and assign a liaison to the local Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for the purpose of locating and arranging for the delivery of critical need assets.

3) No instrument currently exists that will identify when a requested resource arrives at its intended location.

4) Throughout this event, there were numerous problems with resources not being available at the appropriate place and time of need. Subsequent events of this magnitude should consider establishing a more centralized warehousing system for storing in-kind donations, in order to more effectively manage the proper

5) Supplies and equipment were being requested on a short notice basis by both the Oklahoma City Fire Department Logistics Center and the State Medical Examiner's Office, with apparently little or no planning for future needs. Respective supervisors should consider long-term plans and request necessary supplies and/or equipment 72 hours in advance, if possible.

6) Local, state and federal emergency management agencies need to consider developing an initial individual equipment issue system for emergencies of this magnitude. Several items of individual equipment, needed by search and rescue personnel, might include: steel-toed work boots, heavy protective clothing, such as military Battle Dress Uniforms (BDUs), gloves, hard hats, face protection, respirators with high efficiency particulate filters (HEPA), saranex-coated TYVEK protective clothing, long underwear, back supports, and protective eyewear.

**Recommendations:** A State Donations Management Plan/Annex must be developed and incorporated into the SEOP. Additionally, once said plan is completed, it must be distributed as guidance for local government's development of their own plan.

## **H. ESF #8 - HEALTH AND MEDICAL**

Issues covered under "Lessons Learned from other Agencies".

## **I. ESF #9 - URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE**

The State does not have a trained and equipped Urban Search and Rescue Task Force, available for state missions. Search and rescue operations were conducted locally and supplemented federally. Lessons learned on this activity should be covered by each level's After Action Report.

**J. ESF #10 - HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

Issues covered under "Lessons Learned from other Agencies".

**K. ESF #11 - FOOD**

Issues covered under "Lessons Learned from other Agencies".

**L. ESF #12 - ENERGY**

Not Applicable to this report.

**M. SUPPORT ANNEXES**

**1) PUBLIC INFORMATION**

**A. Lessons Learned Concerning Public Information**

The present Public Information Officer (PIO) for ODCM worked for FEMA during the Oklahoma City Bombing disaster. For the event, he served FEMA as Lead PIO and Joint Information Center (JIC) Coordinator. He worked at the ICP, MACC and DFO and currently chairs the Public Information Subcommittee of the Oklahoma City Bombing Disaster Resource Coordination Committee (RCC), the group designed to address all the long-term recovery needs of the disaster's victims. With his knowledge of both federal and state public information operations during the incident, it's relevant to include his observations in this report. They should be beneficial to other public information specialists who will be similarly tasked in future events.

The City of Oklahoma City Public Information Office, at the request of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), established a daily formal briefing event on the afternoon of April 19. From the first meeting, these daily briefings set the tone for interagency cooperation and dissemination of information to the public through the media.

On the evening of April 19, the Public Information Officer for the Oklahoma City Fire Department established two daily briefings at the media area near the Murrah Federal Building, to provide the latest information on the rescue and recovery operations. On Thursday, April 20, the Operations Coordinator for the State Medical Examiner's Office established a briefing twice daily to provide information about the processing and identification of victims, after families had been notified.

The effectiveness of the effort was continually measured by the media reports about the incident and response. Each level of government had a forum to address the media. The Governor provided information about state support, the Mayor discussed issues of concern and needs of the city, the Incident

Commander and Fire Department Public Information Officer provided information about search and rescue efforts, the Chief of Police provided an overview of city law enforcement procedures inside and outside the control area, the FBI updated the investigation progress for federal law enforcement, FEMA covered federal operations and the State Medical Examiner provided information on their work to process and identify the remains of those persons being recovered from the site.

What follows are public information issues encountered during this disaster and recommended actions and implementation.

### **Issue 1:** *Joint Information Center Operations*

**Discussion:** Media coverage was intense from the first hour of the disaster. Efforts to find information were imperative for every news organization, including local, national and international sources. Further complicating the situation was the constant coverage by the local, national and international media. Local media outlets were being carried, live and exclusively, by their networks for the first day. Local media accepted unconfirmed requests for donations, calls for additional volunteers and trained personnel and broadcast them as they came in. This kind of media coverage brought hundreds of spontaneous volunteers and donations.

Although the disaster was confined to a relatively small area in downtown Oklahoma City, the various federal, state, local and volunteer agencies had much to do during the response and recovery phases of the disaster. The opportunity for their public information officers to coordinate information was difficult, because of the variety of locations established for coordinating efforts.

The State Emergency Operations Plan calls for establishment of an effective procedure for a continuous flow of emergency information emanating from the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC), when emergency events occur, or from other state agencies in connection with their respective emergency missions. Provisions for on-site information coordination to support local officials, through establishment of a Joint Information System (JIS) for information sharing, and a Joint Information Center (JIC), as a source for information, was not in the plan.

On the morning of April 23, a Joint Information Center (JIC) was established, at the request of Oklahoma City, in the Multi-Agency Coordination Center, inside the Myriad Convention Center. The JIC monitored both print and broadcast media, disseminated information to the media, answered media inquiries and assisted officials in scheduling broadcast media and print media interviews.



Members of the JIC staff accompanied the local, state and federal officials at events during the response and recovery effort. Personnel assigned to the JIC included representatives from Oklahoma City and Oklahoma County, as well as the State and Federal Public Information Officers. Although not physically located in the JIC, but as a part of the Joint Information System (JIS), coordination was established and maintained with local or regional offices of the U.S. Attorney, Department of Justice, Small Business Administration, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, Social Security Administration, General Services Administration, the Federal Executive Board, the Governor's Press Office, the State Department of Insurance, State Department of Mental Health, Department of Human Services, Highway Patrol, State Bureau of Investigation, State Medical Examiner's Office, Red Cross, United Way and Feed the Children.

The success of the Joint Information Center (JIC) was in establishing a Joint Information System (JIS), providing phone and pager contact with all information sources, and making a constant effort to keep everyone informed on developing situations, internal and external problems and opportunities, so that media questions and public inquiries could be referred to the appropriate source for answers.

**Recommendations:** The State Emergency Operations Plan needs to be updated. Plans should call for immediately establishing a state and local Joint Information System, as soon as possible. An inquiry of local officials should be done to ascertain their need and interest in setting-up an on-site Joint Information Center.

Whenever possible, a representative from each entity involved with a disaster (local, state, federal, volunteer and private sector) should be represented in the JIC. If this is not possible, it is recommended that radio communications, cellular phones and digital pagers should be acquired and provided for each agency's key media contact. This has proven to be the only way to successfully coordinate information during media-intensive disaster scenarios.

**Issue 2:** *News releases and dissemination to the media.*

**Discussion:** News releases should be kept to a minimum in any emergency and in a one-page, easy-to-read format. In this disaster, with so much day-to-day contact with the media, when a release was sent, in many cases the media used precisely what had been issued because of its simplicity. FEMA supported the dissemination effort through the use of the computer-based FAX system at their headquarters. This provided an efficient method of distribution of news releases during the early days of operation. Although some of their list needed to be updated because of FAX phone number changes for a few of the media outlets,

being able to target local area media with an Oklahoma-specific group on area-specific releases contributed to the success with the media.

**Recommendations:** Continue to keep news releases to a minimum, include all concerned agencies in their distribution and use the a computer-based FAX system during the first few media-intensive weeks. After initial media attention has subsided, it is suggested that a local area FAX group be established on a FAX machine in the JIC, that will get the word to those who need it, rather than a wide area distribution for outlets who are no longer following the story.

**Issue 3:** *PIO knowledge, skills and abilities in an overwhelming media response disaster.*

**Discussion:** The State PIO was not included in decisions made by the Federal Lead PIO and the JIC Coordinator, regarding deployment of PIO's and technical specialists for this disaster. Despite repeated requests for additional personnel, the JIC was short-handed during this disaster.

**Recommendations:** Lists of specialists, available for a disaster, need to be provided to the State and Federal Lead Public Affairs Officers and the JIC Coordinator, listing PIO abilities or specialties to aid the federal-state team.

It is recommended that a cadre of state-trained public information volunteers and reservists be developed to support the Oklahoma Department of Civil Emergency Management on future disasters. This would allow representation at the State Emergency Operations Center and the Joint Information Center, as well as in field situations where necessary.

**Issue 4:** *Media monitoring, photo and video documentation functions and staffing in a media-intensive, mass-fatalities disaster.*

**Discussion:** Photo and video documentation during a disaster are important for several reasons, but were especially important during this media-intensive, mass-fatalities incident. With a shortage of equipment and personnel, early in this disaster, the Federal-State PIO team was unable to record media coverage during the first week.

Media analysis was also difficult, because of the overwhelming amount of coverage.

Photo/video documentation was difficult, because of limited personnel and the wide variety of activities being conducted to support this disaster. The assistance of two local emergency management volunteers was invaluable for this function.

**Recommendations:** At the local, state and federal level, efforts should be made to recruit technically qualified people available for a JIC, to cover all the work-intensive aspects of a disaster where there is a major demand for both photo and video documentation and media monitoring/analysis. Having appropriate equipment available at the State EOC, and on scene, as quickly as possible, is also important to the media monitoring and photo and video documentation effort.

**Issue 5:** *Job-related stress in a media-intensive JIC operation.*

**Discussion:** During the course of working any disaster, people often let stress build up to the point of being overwhelmed. In this work-intensive, mass-fatalities response and recovery operation, the entire staff showed constant care and concern for each other, in an effort to ensure each employee was able to deal with the situation.

**Recommendations:** Employees should be provided the opportunity to attend at least one Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) session during, or immediately following any disaster, especially in a mass fatalities incident. The CISD session provides the employee with a better understanding of how to vent any anger, frustration and/or confusion they are feeling. They can also be shown healthy ways to deal with the stress during these sessions. This is especially important during a media-intensive JIC operation where mass fatalities and injuries consume the media coverage and there is a constant request for information about the casualties and rescue operations.

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### III. LESSONS LEARNED FROM OTHER AGENCIES

*Numerous agencies from all levels of government and the voluntary agency sector responded to the Murrah Building Bombing. In the summer of 1995, ODCM requested all state agencies and voluntary organizations we had dealings with to provide After Action Reports, emphasizing "lessons learned". The following agencies responded to the request. Each agency's mission/activities, pursuant to the disaster, is provided, as well as recommendations they feel need consideration prior to another similar event.*

#### A. American Red Cross

**Mission/Activities:** The response of the American Red Cross was immediate and sustaining. Disaster Action Team members, from the Oklahoma County Chapter, arrived on the scene within five minutes of the explosion to assist with rescue operations, first aid, mass care and triage. Shortly afterwards, four Red Cross Emergency Response

Vehicles arrived on the scene, providing food and drinks for victims and rescue workers.

Later the first day, Red Cross volunteers opened a Logistics Center in the garage of Southwestern Bell Telephone's Corporate Headquarters. The chapter was immediately staffed by employees and volunteers who began operations in mass care, disaster welfare inquiry, damage assessment, mental health and health services, logistics and communications. Red Cross Government Liaisons staffed the State Emergency Operations Center and the Multi-Agency Coordination Center, to enhance communications between government agencies and their organization.

The Oklahoma County Chapter received numerous Disaster Welfare Inquiries from immediate family members, locally and across the nation. Inquiries were accepted from immediate family members. Thirty (30) hours into the incident, Red Cross Disaster Welfare Inquiry staff accurately reported 711 victims accounted for and 167 missing. This information was provided to the State Medical Examiner's Office to assist in the identification process. Close coordination with the Medical Examiner's Office continued for the next 21 days.

Experienced disaster workers, from across the nation, quickly arrived to begin extended operations. The chapter was used as a congregation facility for parents of missing children and for FBI operations. Twenty-two hundred (2,200) volunteers registered with the Red Cross in one day.

A shelter was established at St. Luke's Methodist Church and continued operations for 10 days, following the incident. A Service Center was established at Shepherd Mall, near the FEMA/State Recovery Service Center, and at the Trade Winds Motel, where most tenants of the Regency Tower apartment building were temporarily housed.

Red Cross Disaster Mental Health workers assisted in staffing the State Medical Examiner's Family Assistance Center (a.k.a. The Compassion Center) at First Christian Church, where family members of victims received notification, information and counseling. Red Cross Family Services, Health Services and Mental Health Services developed a unique "compassion team", whose focus was to reach all families of the deceased, and victims who had been hospitalized or experienced other medical problems. A recovery project was established at Shepherd Mall to assist victims and their families with long-term unmet needs.

Red Cross Logistics established a warehouse at a Coca-Cola plant, where large quantities of donated goods could be staged.

At the close of the response, over 6,800 volunteers had worked on the job with over 9,600 spontaneous volunteers having registered.

### **Lessons Learned/Recommendations:**

*Communications* - The communications problems experienced by many of the rescue/relief agencies were also experienced by the Red Cross. Cellular phone service was overloaded soon after the bombing. The Red Cross hand-held radios were also inoperative. The only communications we had on the scene was the low-band VHF, located in our emergency response vehicle. This severely limited the mobility of incident command on the scene. A proposal has been submitted to upgrade our hand-held radios, but limited chapter funding at this time has postponed this acquisition.

*Lengthy Chain-of-Command* - The Red Cross assistance efforts were carried out in a wide variety of venues and locations. The many logistics sites, mass care feeding sites and service delivery locations provided a challenge for command, control and communications. This challenge occurred early on when needs were being met through non-traditional service areas, especially in logistics. We resolved this challenge by staffing supervisory personnel at the site and at the service delivery areas. These people met daily with the headquarters staff so communication and job problems could be handled more efficiently.

*Unauthorized Personnel Registration* - The Red Cross was overwhelmed by the magnitude of spontaneous volunteers who came to the chapter to help. This tremendous response led to volunteers who were quickly assigned jobs, but were not properly registered nor properly identified. Our Local Disaster Volunteer (LDV) Coordinator quickly regained control of the situation by working with the FBI and requiring that only the LDV Coordinator's signature on their I.D. would be valid. This procedure was quite time-consuming, but necessary in working with the FBI. Since the site was a crime scene, all our volunteers were required to be critically screened before they could work at the bomb site. Our plan for the next major disaster will be to issue temporary I.D.s early in the disaster with an expiration date three days into the disaster. These temporary I.D.s would be color-coded and easily recognizable. Those volunteers who continue to work on the job would then be issued a permanent/valid I.D. for the remaining time.

## **B. The National Weather Service**

**Mission/Activities:** Several rounds of potentially severe weather, with high winds and frequent cloud-to-ground lightening, provided times where safety of search and rescue teams was threatened. The National Weather Service, Norman Center, provided continuous watch on these events and good lead time on warnings.

**Lessons Learned/Recommendations:** The ability to provide graphic information, via computer, on-site was not up to our expectations. We envision developing some type of weather package we can take on-site to provide more information at the scene.

## **C. The Oklahoma Board of Medicolegal Investigations (The Office of the State Medical Examiner)**

**Mission/Activities:** The mission of the agency was to recover and identify the dead, assist the fatalities' families, determine the cause and manner of death, and to collect and identify evidence.

Major activities under this mission included:

- 1) Documentation, extraction and transportation of each fatality from the Murrah Building to the main morgue;
- 2) Collection and identification of human remains for the purpose of matching each to the appropriate fatality; and,
- 3) Establishing the Family Assistance Center, to provide current information to family members and notify family members when a victim had been recovered and identified.

**Lessons Learned/Recommendations:** Increased emphasis must be placed on documentation. Early in an event of this magnitude, a "scribe" or personal secretary should be assigned to each key personnel.

Personnel should be dedicated to track work hours and activities of all department staff at each represented location.

## **D. The Oklahoma Department of Corrections**

**Mission/Activities:** Corrections Officers provided support in primary perimeter security.

**Lessons Learned/Recommendations:** None Submitted

## **E. The Oklahoma Department of Education**

**Mission/Activities:** Coordinated counseling services provided to area students affected by the bombing.

**Lessons Learned/Recommendations:** None Submitted

#### **F. The Oklahoma Health Department**

**Mission/Activities:** Provided nursing and immunization support throughout the duration of the event. Provided 24-hour liaison staff for operations at the SEOC.

**Lessons Learned/Recommendations:**

- 1) Communications weakness with site;
- 2) Coordination of medical support at site was lacking;
- 3) There was no clearly defined point or location for patient regulation;
- 4) Several dispensaries were established by different groups in the area, but there did not seem to be any communication or coordination between each;
- 5) Many volunteers and groups of volunteers called, but there was no specific number or location where they could be referred;
- 6) Some volunteers traveled considerable distances, only to find out their services were not needed;
- 7) There were so many groups providing free food that storage and distribution became a problem;
- 8) Although data collection began immediately after the bombing, it was difficult for some hospitals to identify all patients related to the incident; and,
- 9) There should be a central location where requested items can be obtained, therefore inhibiting the need to request items which are already in supply.

#### **G. The Oklahoma Department of Human Services**

**Mission/Activities:** Provided personnel to staff both the SEOC and Disaster Field Office. Provided caseworkers and counselors for individuals affected and represented the state on the Federal Donations

Coordination Team. Administered the Individual and Family Grant Program at the Recovery Service Center.

**Lessons Learned/Recommendations:**

- 1) There is a need for additional planning and preparation of DHS field staff in responding to disasters; and,
- 2) The management of donations was an overwhelming task which would be improved in the future by implementation of the FEMA Donations Management System.

**H. The Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services**

**Mission/Activities:** Nurses and physicians were deployed to local hospitals immediately following the bombing. Psychiatrists and psychologists assisted in death notifications at the Family Assistance Center. One staff member was detailed to the FEMA/State Disaster Field Office. Two youth center employees were detailed to the Recovery Service Center. Five of the clinical staff were assigned to Project Heartland. One staff member was detailed to coordinate all disaster-related activities, while a number of employees volunteered to staff the 24-hour Crisis Hotline. The Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services established Project Heartland, and provided debriefing services to victims, family members, businesses and rescue workers. The department also coordinated mental health crisis response with FEMA and the Public Health Service. Additionally, we have established a strategic planning group which advises on service priorities, training needs and community awareness programs. Five community mental health centers, within central Oklahoma, conducted group debriefings for various agencies. The five centers established mobile outreach teams to provide debriefings and other needed crisis services. In conjunction with the Department of Human Services - Aging Service Division, counseling for older adults in nursing homes, assisted living centers and senior nutrition centers was provided. The Red Rock Community Mental Health Center took the lead in coordinating the establishment of support groups throughout central Oklahoma.

**Lessons Learned/Recommendations:** There needs to be more interaction/planning efforts between the Oklahoma Department of Civil Emergency Management and the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, concerning crisis mental health services in disaster situations.



## **I. The Oklahoma Insurance Commission**

**Mission/Activities:** Worked directly with insurance companies to assure that any and all claims were handled in a quick and efficient manner. This included removal of the normal time restraints involved in claim settlement, providing temporary licenses to adjustors who needed to assess various losses, and providing assistance at a central location.

**Lessons Learned/Recommendations:** It appeared to take a few days for individual victims to receive the word that the Recovery Service Center had been opened.

## **J. The Oklahoma National Guard (ONG)**

**Mission Activities:** Though the Oklahoma National Guard participated in many missions throughout the event, their major missions can be outlined as follows:

- 1) Perimeter security around the Murrah Building;
- 2) Security of the State Medical Examiner's Office;
- 3) Provided equipment and manpower as tasked by ODCM;
- 4) Provided Medical Specialist assistance to the Medical Examiner's Office;
- 5) Helicopter support for the U.S. Marshals Service;
- 6) Provided "Reaction Team" for security missions;
- 7) Helicopter support to transport bomb-detecting equipment from Tulsa;
- 8) Provided casualty assistance; and,
- 9) Provided manpower to comb debris for evidence, in support of the FBI.

**Lessons Learned/Recommendations:** Lessons learned from the operation, as provided by ONG, are detailed as follows:

- 1) Internal command and control problems at two different Operation Centers;
- 2) Identification Badge requirement and process took too much time;
- 3) Too many Operations Centers;

- 4) ONG representatives at the SEOC lacked knowledge of the system;
- 5) No State Soldier's and Sailor's Relief Act;
- 6) State Tort Claims Act does not contain language concerning terrorists or bombings, with regard to exemption from liability; and,
- 7) Lack of trained EOC personnel for sustained operations.

**K. The Oklahoma Department of Public Safety (Oklahoma Highway Patrol)**

**Mission/Activities:** Provided immediate response of patrol units and medical assistance at bomb site. Responding units provided assistance to the Oklahoma City Police Department in traffic control and securing the crime scene. Bomb squad and tactical team were part of the initial response.

For the long-term mission, provided security, communications, law enforcement, traffic control and bomb team assistance. Additional duties included dignitary protection and escort, transportation and security of suspects, and assistance to Secret Service concerning the Presidential visit.

**Lessons Learned/Recommendations:**

- 1) Multiple communication channels with no common frequencies;
- 2) Limited coordination of information with operations centers, versus on-site command posts;
- 3) Lack of portable communication equipment;
- 4) Accessibility by the media to monitor radio and cellular phone communications; and,
- 5) Parallel requests going through separate command structures for similar items.

**L. The Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI)**

**Mission/Activities:** The mission for employees of OSBI is to provide exceptional investigative, laboratory and informational services to law enforcement, prosecutors, legislative committees and the Governor of the State of Oklahoma, in support of their efforts to promote the highest quality of life for the citizens of the state. During the response to the

Murrah Building Bombing, OSBI undertook the following major missions:

- 1) Tracking of accounted and unaccounted victims;
- 2) Manned telephones at Task Force site;
- 3) Provided expertise in victim identification through DNA and fingerprint analysis, including collection of latent prints from victims' homes;
- 4) Housed BATF trace explosive detection instrumentation and assisted in evidence collection;
- 5) Assisted BATF and FBI in taking and processing aerial and other photographs;
- 6) Assisted BATF and FBI in running-down investigative leads;
- 7) Developed composite drawings;
- 8) Created and modified time-line charts for use by the FBI and the Department of Justice; and,
- 9) Assisted FBI in creating suspect line-ups by providing facility in which to house subjects to be included, and by taking photographs.

**Lessons Learned/Recommendations:** None Submitted

#### **M. The Oklahoma Department of Transportation**

**Mission/Activities:** Primarily provided traffic control access from the Interstate Highways and the downtown area. Additionally, provided personnel and equipment to support search and rescue efforts, as well as the FBI in search for evidence.

**Lessons Learned/Recommendations:** None Submitted

#### **N. The Salvation Army**

**Mission/Activities:** Within 40 minutes, the Oklahoma City Command had two mobile feeding and response units on site, prepared to serve. In approximately two hours from that time, two other units from Tulsa and Ada responded and were on site. The Salvation Army deployed seven mobile feeding units to the site, in total.

The normal mission of The Salvation Army, in times of crisis, is to provide physical and spiritual relief and comfort to victims of the tragedy, as well as to serve rescuers and workers involved in the response/recovery operation. This includes mobile feeding units supplying routine refreshments, as well as standard meals. Additionally, provisions are made for counseling and spiritual guidance, a conduit for requested supplies and materials, financial managerial casework assistance for victims and their relatives, and other general support activity, as requested.

The Salvation Army operated three mobile Social Services offices and provided personnel in cooperation with FEMA at the Recovery Service Center.

**Lessons Learned/Recommendations:** None Submitted

#### **O. Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD)**

**Mission/Activities:** This group is traditionally the catalyst for accepting and processing material and cash donations and for the creation of an unmet needs committee during a disaster. Early in the disaster, donations management was intense, and overwhelmed many of the organizations who were trying to keep up with the sheer volume of material and cash coming in.

Although it was not a priority during the early days of this disaster, within three weeks following the event, it became apparent that some of the needs of the victims would best be served by forming a committee. The group is now known as the Oklahoma City Bombing Disaster Resource Coordination Committee (RCC) of Oklahoma City. They have coordinated interagency distribution of nearly \$2 million in aid through one of a dozen case management agencies, and from nearly 80 fund sources, established by a variety of social, religious, service and fraternal organizations. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) has organized a focus group for long-term disaster recovery needs, which is being staffed by some of the key participants on the RCC. This group is working to develop a database for referring victims with long term needs, beyond the time when the RCC considers it practical to continue its weekly, or even monthly meetings.

**Lessons Learned/Recommendations:** Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters should be solicited to work with the state during non-disaster times to be prepared for donations management, and have a plan for the fast effective creation of an unmet needs committee. The effort needs to include both logistics for material and cash donations. The

availability of organizations that have disaster fund sources, as well as capabilities for trucking and storage should be ascertained, and locations should be tracked so that deployment and use can be affected as soon as possible following an incident.

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# The Oklahoma Department of Civil Emergency Management

## After Action Report

### Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building Bombing

19 April 1995 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

### Statistics

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The following page consist of a variety of statistical charts and information pertaining to the effects of the 19 April bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Building. ODCEM has made every attempt to take statistical information provided by all agencies and levels of government involved and consolidate said data into the most accurate information possible.

#### OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING

##### Fatalities

Fatalities in the Murrah Building: 160

Fatalities in the Athenian Building: 4

Fatalities in the OWRB Building: 2

Fatalities outside, near the blast: 1

Fatalities of responding emergency personnel: 1

TOTAL: 168

##### Fatalities by Agency:

Federal:

Department of Agriculture: 7  
Department of Defense: 5  
DOT/Federal Highway Administration: 11  
Drug Enforcement Administration: 5  
Federal Credit Union: 18  
    Credit Union Customers: 3  
General Services Administration: 2  
Housing and Urban Development: 35  
Secret Service: 6  
Social Security Administration: 16  
    SSA Customers: 24  
U.S. Army Recruiting Battalion: 7  
    Visitors: 1  
U.S. Customs Service: 2  
U.S. Marine Corps Recruiting Station: 2

State:

Oklahoma Water Resources Board: 2

All Others:

America's Kids Day-Care Center (3 employees, 15 children): 18  
Company representative making a delivery to the Murrah Building: 1  
Citizen in parking lot across from Murrah Building: 1  
Company employee working in Athenian Building: 1  
Nurse responding to the disaster: 1

Injuries

Summary of Injuries:

People treated in local hospitals (426)

    People admitted to hospitals: 82

    People treated and released from emergency rooms: 344

People treated in private physician's office (175)

Types of Injuries Among Hospitalized Persons (82 total)

    Lacerations, abrasions and contusions: 77

    Fractures and dislocations: 36

    Head injuries: 35

    Eye injuries: 21

    Burns: 5

Types of Injuries Among Persons Treated and Released (344 total)

    Lacerations, abrasions and contusions: 285

    Fractures and dislocations: 13

Head injuries: 40  
Eye injuries: 20  
Statistics provided by The Oklahoma Department of Health

#### State Medical Examiner's Means of Victim Identification

Dental and Fingerprints: 77  
Dental: 44  
Fingerprints: 25  
Radiology: 6  
Visual - Hospital: 4  
Palmprint: 4  
DNA: 3  
Footprint: 1  
Toeprint: 1  
Dental, Fingerprints and DNA: 1  
Visual Statistics, Marked Scar and Photograph: 1  
Palmprint and Dental: 1  
  
TOTAL: 168

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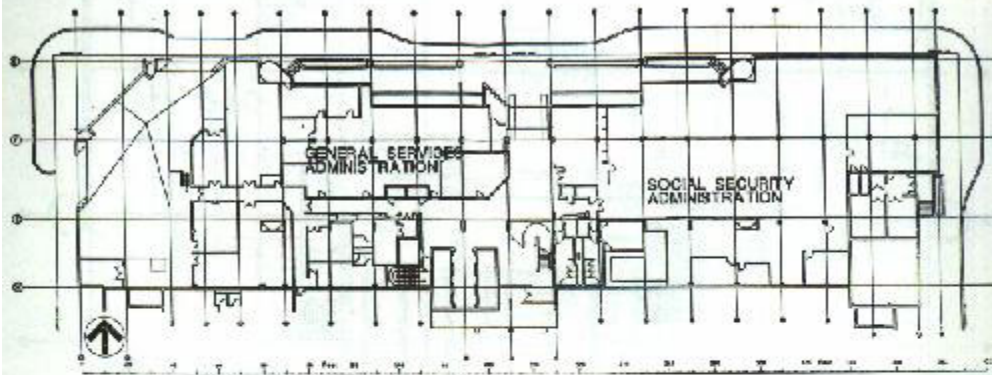
#### Exhibits

Exhibit A - Murrah Building Floor Plan  
Image of Floors 1 and 2 (73Kb)  
Image of Floors 3 and 4 (66Kb)  
Image of Floors 5 and 6 (60Kb)  
Image of Floors 7 and 8 (59Kb)  
Image of Floor 9 (37Kb)  
Exhibit B - Downtown Reference Map (93Kb)  
  
Exhibit C - Governor's Executive Order (115Kb)  
  
Exhibit D - President's Emergency Declaration (91Kb)  
  
Exhibit E - Downtown Map with Response Elements (94Kb)  
  
Exhibit F - Urban Search & Rescue Task Forces (72Kb)  
  
Exhibit G - President's Major Disaster Declaration (68Kb)

EXHIBIT A

ALFRED P. MURRAH BUILDING FLOOR PLAN

FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

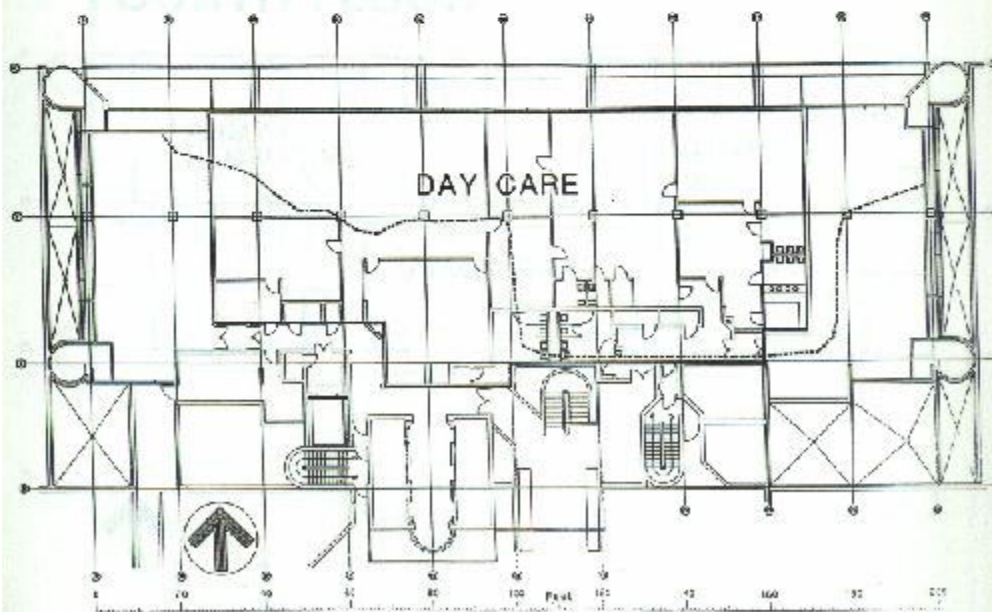
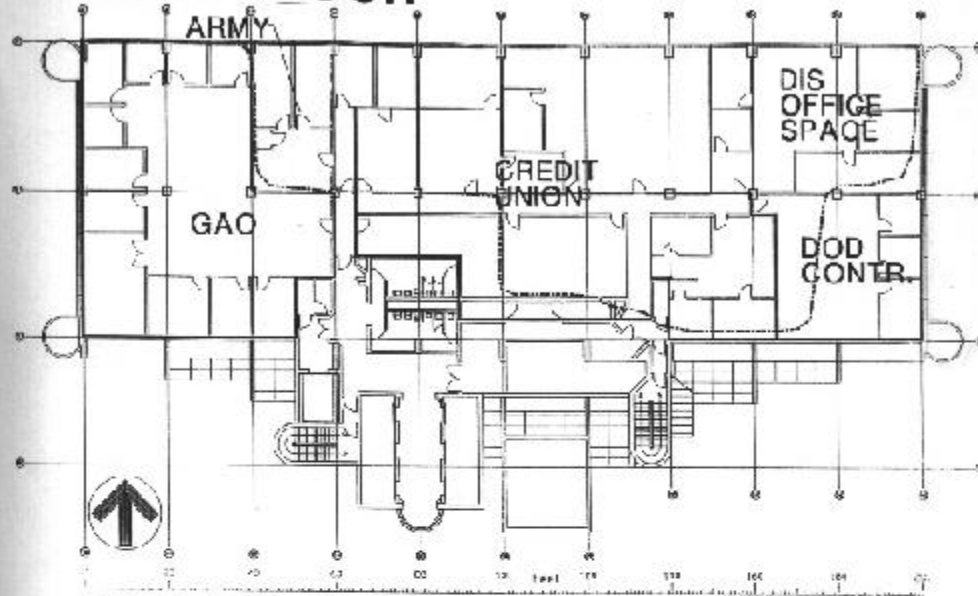


Exhibit A-1



### THIRD FLOOR



### FOURTH FLOOR

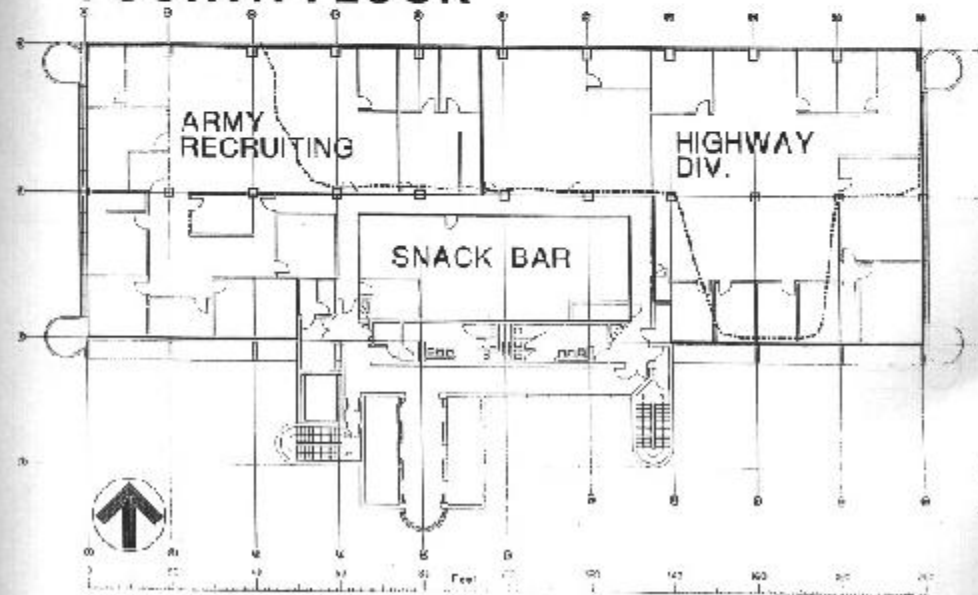
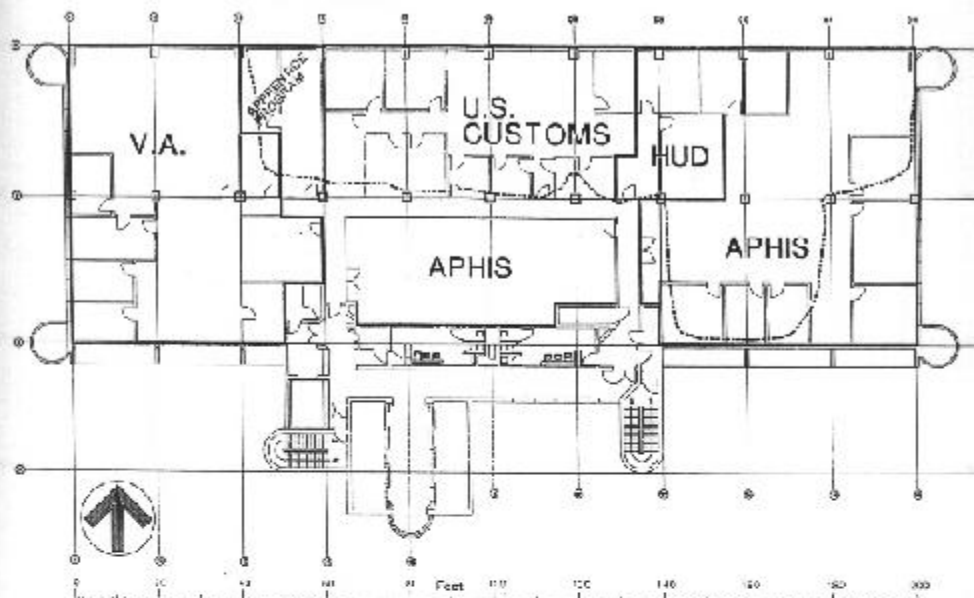


Exhibit A-2

## FIFTH FLOOR



## SIXTH FLOOR

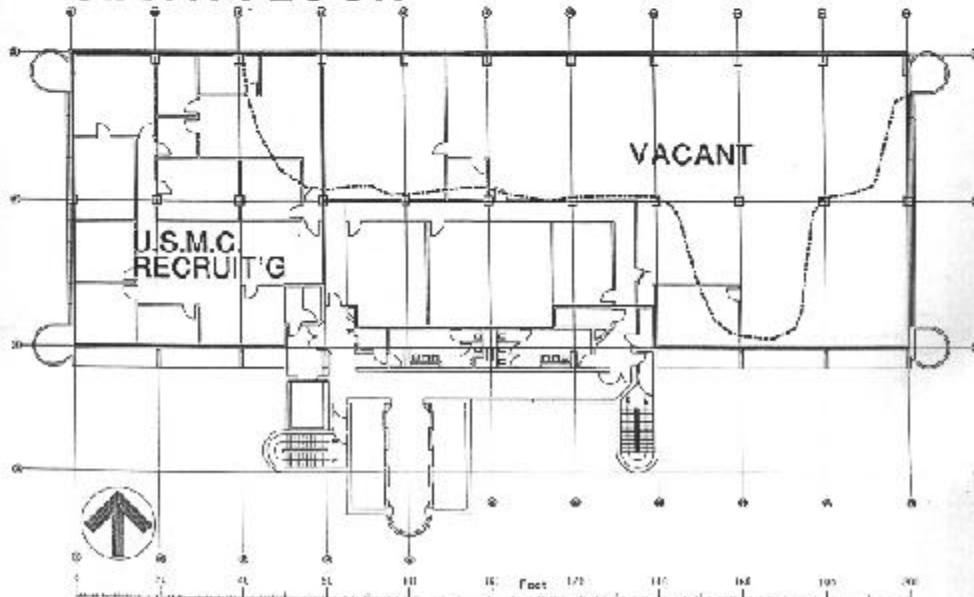
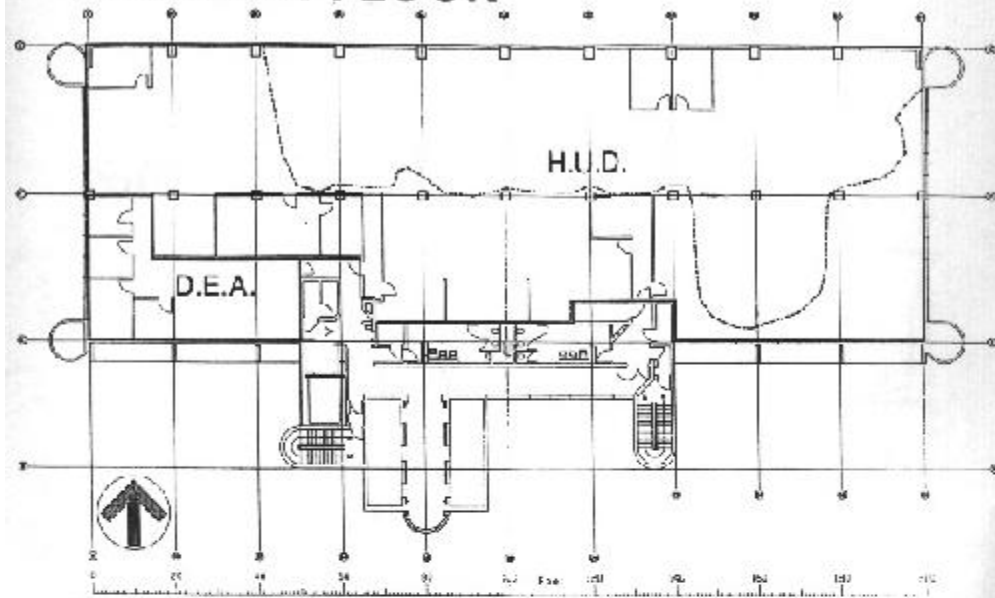


Exhibit A-3

## SEVENTH FLOOR



## EIGHTH FLOOR

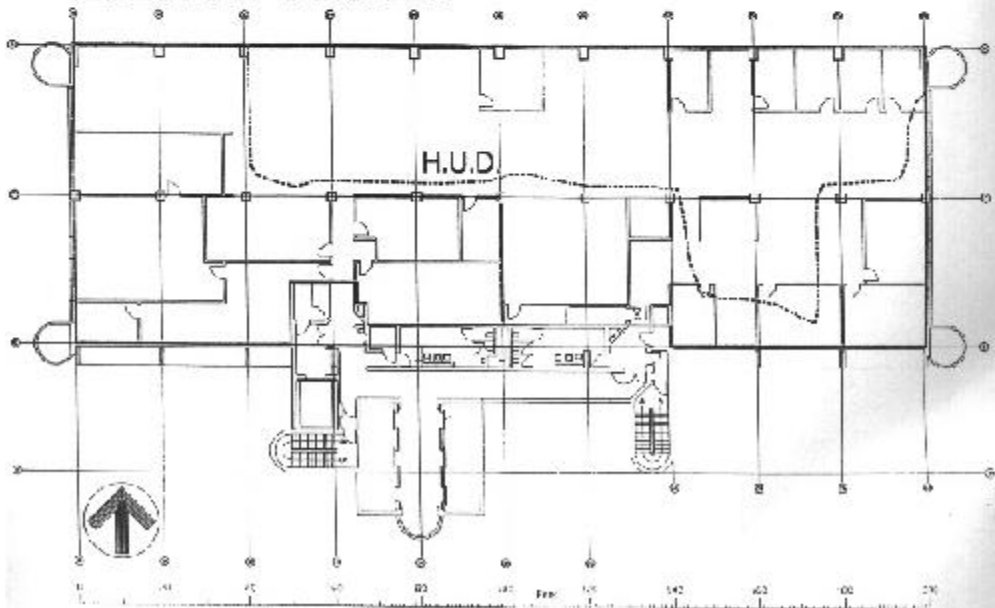
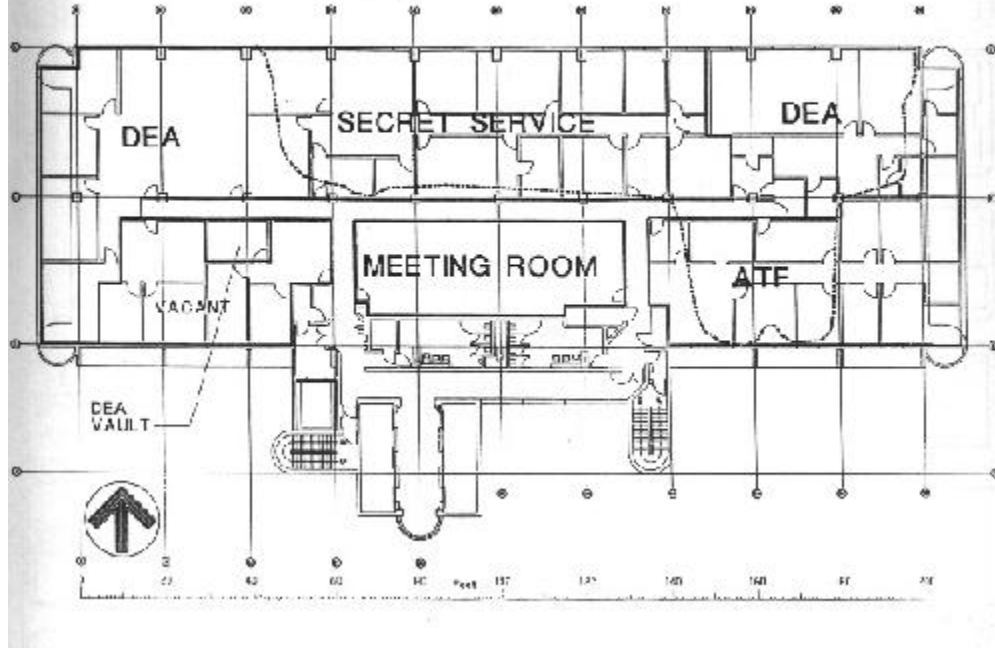


Exhibit A-4

# NINTH FLOOR



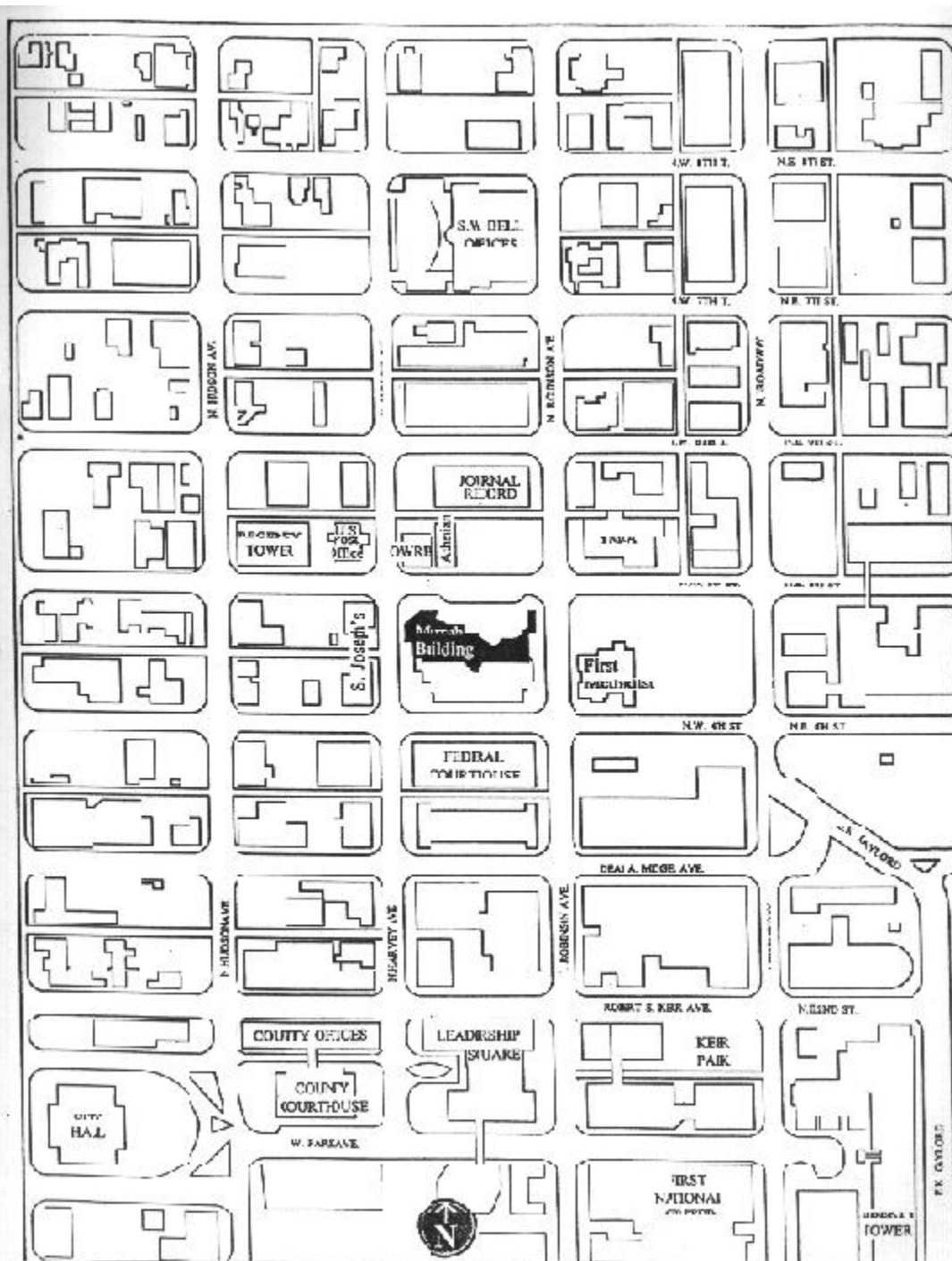


Exhibit 3

STATE OF OKLAHOMA  
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT  
EXECUTIVE ORDER 95-

WHEREAS, the Executive Department has caused a survey to be made, to the extent possible in the area of Oklahoma City affected by a devastating explosion at the A. P. Murrah Federal Building at approximately 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, April 19, 1995, and has determined an emergency exists necessitating emergency measures for the protection of the public peace, health, and safety and the preservation of the lives and property of the people of this State; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to provide for the rendering of mutual aid among the State and political subdivisions of the State and to cooperate with the federal government with respect to carrying out disaster emergency functions during the continuance of the state of emergency pursuant to the provisions of the Oklahoma Civil Defense and Emergency Resources Management Act, 63 O.S. 1991, Sections 683.1 et seq.

NOW THEREFORE, by the authority conferred upon me by the Constitution and the Laws of the State of Oklahoma, the following declarations are made:

1. There is hereby declared a disaster emergency caused by an explosion in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma which has threatened the lives and property of the people of this State and the public's peace, health and safety.
2. The resources of all State departments and agencies available to meet the emergency are hereby committed to the reasonable extent necessary to prevent, minimize and repair injury and damage and to protect lives, the same to be coordinated by the Director of the Department of Civil Emergency Management with comparable functions of the federal government and political subdivisions of the State.
3. Said declaration of emergency shall terminate as provided in 63 O.S. 1991, Sections 683.3 (3).

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the State of Oklahoma to be affixed at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, this 19th Day of April, 1995.

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA

ATTEST:

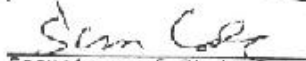
  
Secretary of State

Exhibit C

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

April 19, 1995

The Honorable James L. Witt  
Director  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Mr. Witt:

I have determined that the explosion at the Federal courthouse in Oklahoma City, on April 19, 1995, in the State of Oklahoma is of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant an emergency declaration under subsection 501(b) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (the Stafford Act). My decision to make this declaration pursuant to subsection 501(b) of the Stafford Act is based upon the fact that the explosion occurred at a Federally-owned courthouse. I, therefore, declare that such an emergency exists in the city of Oklahoma City in the State of Oklahoma.

In order to provide Federal assistance, you are hereby authorized to coordinate and direct other Federal agencies and fund activities not authorized under other Federal statutes and allocate from funds available for these purposes, such amounts as you find necessary for Federal emergency assistance and administrative expenses.

Pursuant to this emergency declaration, you are authorized to provide emergency assistance as you deem appropriate under Title V of the Stafford Act at 100 percent Federal funding.

Sincerely,

*Bill Clinton*

Exhibit D

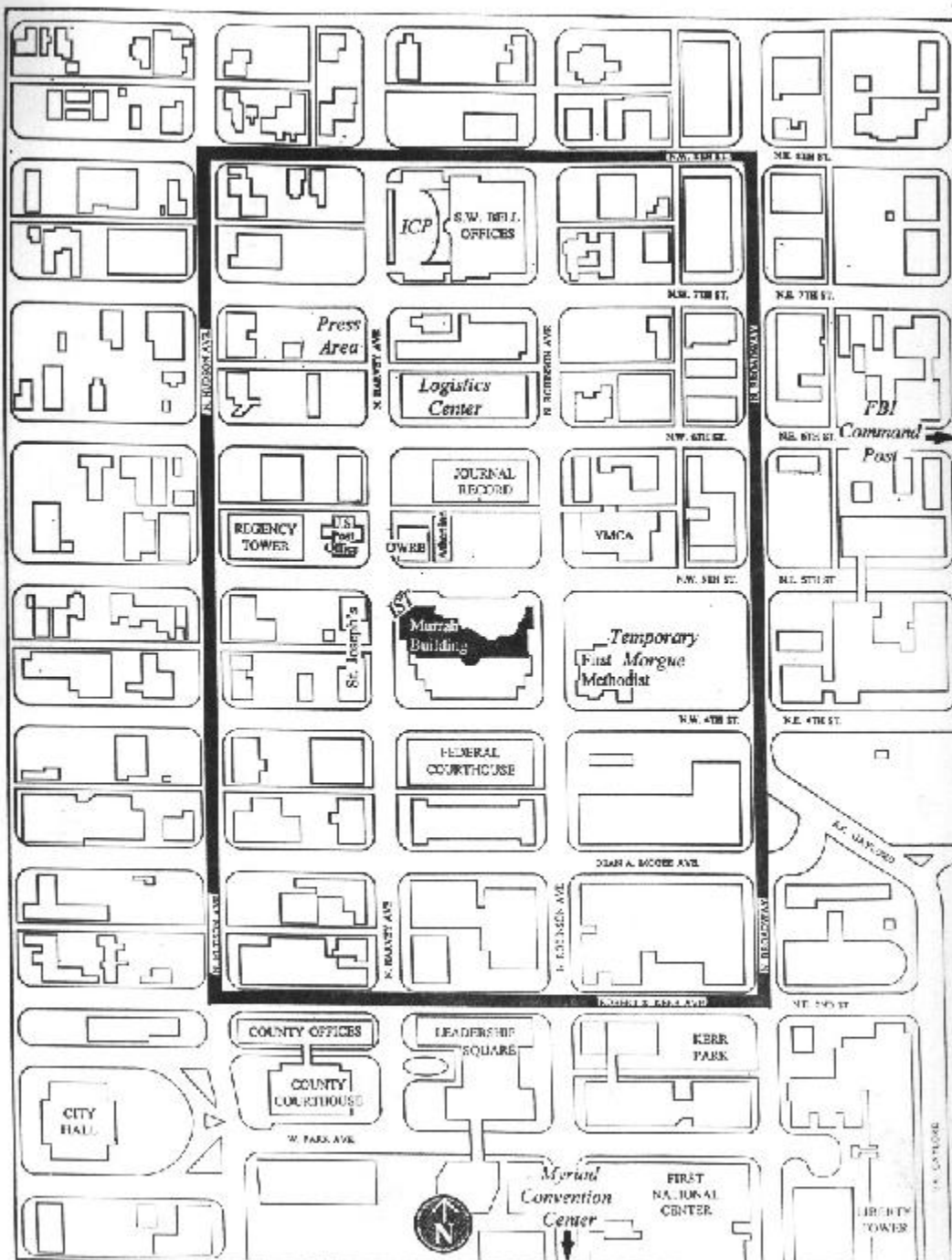
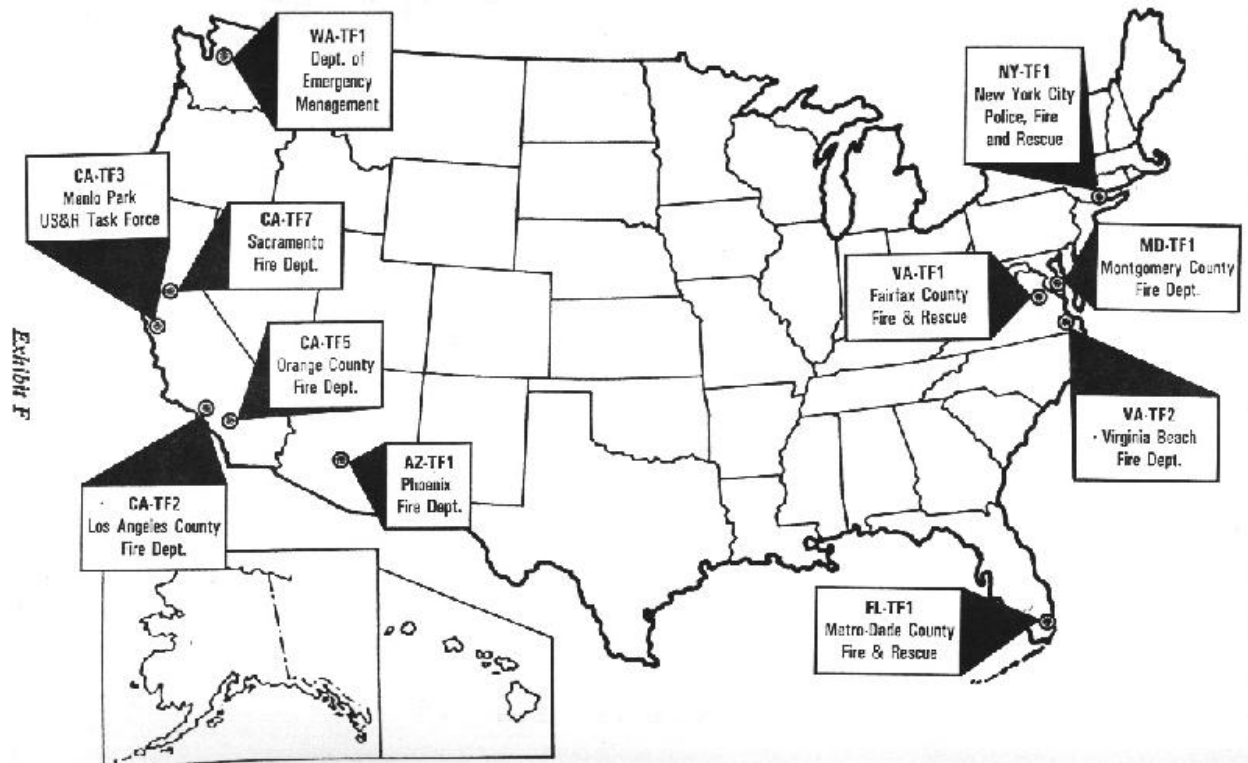


Exhibit E



## Responding US & R Task Forces



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

April 26, 1995

The Honorable James L. Witt  
Director  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Mr. Witt:

I have determined that the explosion at the Alfred P. Murrah Federal building in Oklahoma City, on April 19, 1995, in the State of Oklahoma is of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant a major disaster under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (the Stafford Act). I, therefore, declare that such a major disaster exists in Oklahoma County in the State of Oklahoma.

In order to provide Federal assistance, you are hereby authorized to allocate from funds available for these purposes, such amounts as you find necessary for federal disaster assistance and administrative expenses.

You are authorized to provide Individual Assistance in the designated area. Public Assistance may be added at a later date, if requested and warranted.

Sincerely,

*Bill Clinton*

Exhibit G

# Oklahoma Department of Civil Emergency Management

## Exhibit H

### Personnel Roster

April 19, 1995

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Director: Tom Feuerborn  
Deputy Director: Gordon Keith Allen  
Public Information: Gene Krier  
Executive Secretary: Barbara Taylor  
Receptionist: Bonnie McKelvey  
Receptionist: Rose Smith

Disaster Recovery Manager: Albert Ashwood  
Recovery Officer: Larry Culp

Chief of Operations: Ron Hill  
Earthquake Officer: Larry Brewer  
Training Officer: Larry Loomis  
Exercise Officer: Fred Liebe  
Communications Officer: Ken Fields  
Senior Operations Officer: Joe McGraw  
Operations Officer: Joe Mays  
Hazardous Materials Officer: Ken Lumry  
Radiological Technician: John Ewing  
Radiological Technician: Roy Porter  
Administrative Assistant: Connie Dill  
Training Secretary: Sherry McHendry

Chief of Planning: Dale Magnin  
Planner: Fred Wiener

Chief Financial Officer: Bill Aughtry  
Accountant: Murray Kelley

Personnel: Christine Jolly  
Purchasing: Margaret Barnard

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# Exhibit I

## Acronyms

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ACOE - Army Corps of Engineers  
ARC - American Red Cross  
BATF - Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco & Firearms  
CAP - Civil Air Patrol  
CISD - Critical Incident Stress Debriefings  
DCO - Defense Coordinating Officer  
DEA - Drug Enforcement Administration  
DFO - Disaster Field Office  
DH&HS - Department of Health and Human Services  
DHS - Department of Human Services  
DMORT - Disaster Mortuary Team  
DOD - Department of Defense  
DoJ - Department of Justice  
DOT - Department of Transportation  
DPS - Department of Public Safety  
EMSA - Emergency Medical Services Authority  
EOC - Emergency Operations Center  
EOP - Emergency Operations Plan  
FBI - Federal Bureau of Investigation  
FCO - Federal Coordinating Officer  
FEMA - Federal Emergency Management Agency  
FHA - Federal Highway Administration  
FRP - Federal Response Plan  
GAO - General Accounting Office  
GSA - General Services Administration  
HUD - Housing and Urban Development  
IC - Incident Commander  
ICP - Incident Command Post  
ICS - Incident Command System  
IST - Incident Support Team  
I&FG - Individual and Family Grant  
IEMS - Integrated Emergency Management System

IRS - Internal Revenue Service  
JIC - Joint Information Center  
JIS - Joint Information System  
ME - Medical Examiner  
MERS - Mobile Emergency Response Support  
MACC - Multi-Agency Coordination Center  
NWS - National Weather Service  
OCFD - Oklahoma City Fire Department  
OCPD - Oklahoma City Police Department  
ODCEM - Oklahoma Department of Civil Emergency Management  
OHP - Oklahoma Highway Patrol  
OMD - Oklahoma Military Department  
ONG - Oklahoma National Guard  
OSBI - Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation  
OWRB - Oklahoma Water Resources Board  
PHS - Public Health Service  
RCC - Resource Coordination Committee  
ROC - Regional Operations Center  
RRP - Regional Response Plan  
RSC - Recovery Service Center  
SBA - Small Business Administration  
SCO - State Coordinating Officer  
SEOC - State Emergency Operations Center  
SEOP - State Emergency Operations Plan  
SSA - Social Security Administration  
US&R - Urban Search and Rescue  
VA - Veterans Administration  
VOAD - Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters

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